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832,000 acres - Maine's 1825 Fire & Its Piscataquis Logging Aftermath

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December 2019

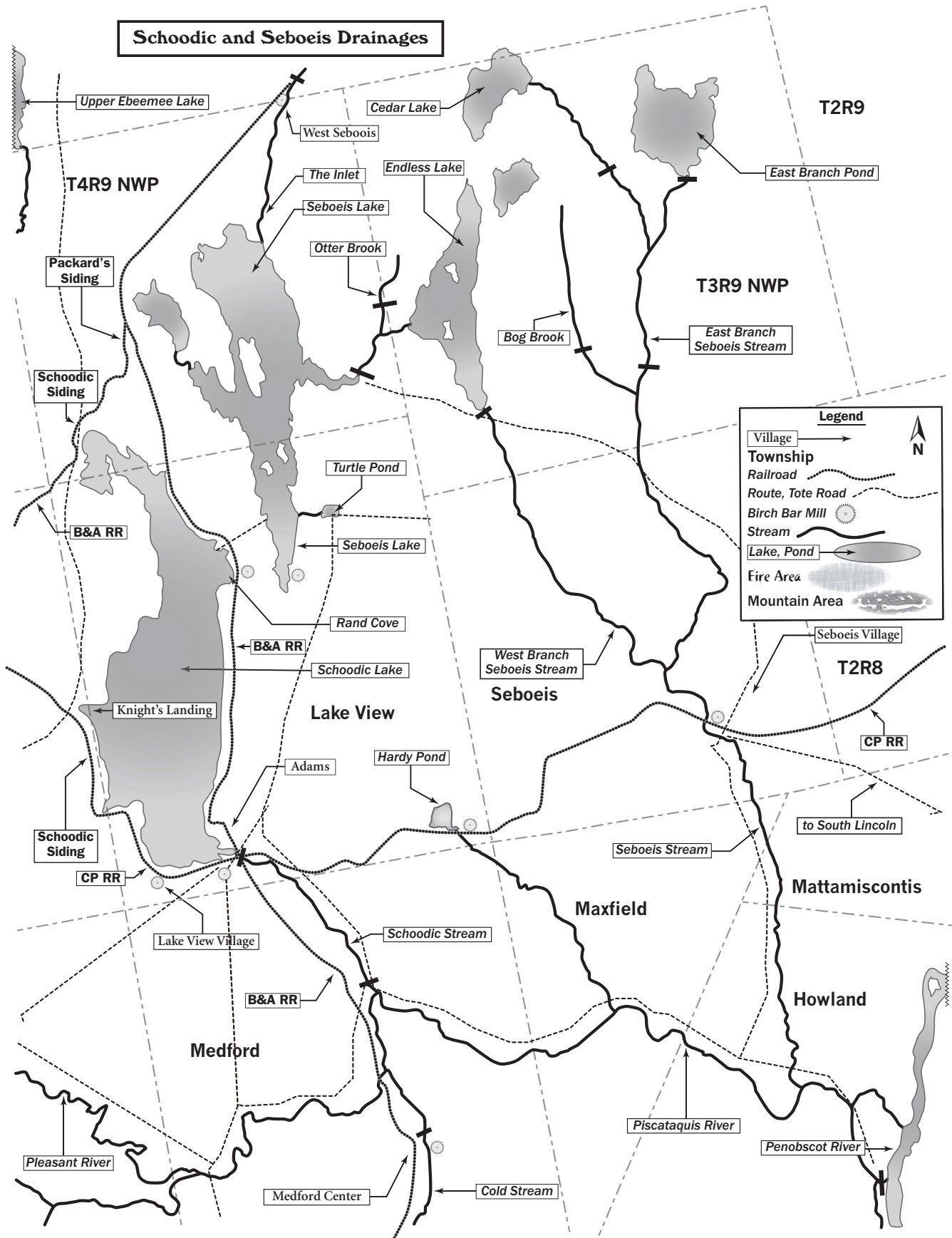
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Schoodic and Seboeis Drainages



Chapter 5: Schoodic Stream drainage

The drainage

Schoodic Lake and its outlet stream, Schoodic Stream (4.3 miles long) drain south to the Piscataquis River in Medford Township at Schoodic Point, 12 miles west of its mouth on the Penobscot River at Howland village. Schoodic Lake with its north-south axis, long enough to span Lake View township, drains the western half of Brownville township, and the eastern half of Lake View township.¹ Schoodic Stream passes through the mid-section of the half of Medford township north of the Piscataquis River.

The land around Schoodic Stream had pines at the time the early loggers and settlers first came up the Piscataquis River c.1800. Whether or not that was true for the eastern half of Lake View township is unknown. The 1820 Alexander Greenwood survey of Seboeis township recorded burn areas along its southern and eastern border, and the R. Holden 1812 survey indicated a fire on the northern edge of Maxfield Township. The extent of these burns is unknown, but could have been present in southern portions of Lake View township. However, pines in Medford township were plentiful, and attracted lumbermen.

Loggers in the first quarter of the nineteenth century cut at the edges of the main waterways. It is likely that no logging operations took place around Schoodic Lake during this era; pines were readily available much closer to a main waterway. The waterpower source at the lower end of Schoodic Stream at the Piscataquis River was of interest to lumberman General John Parker Boyd, who, in 1816, bought the eastern half of Medford township,

an area that included all but the uppermost mile of Schoodic Stream. Boyd built the mill at the site in 1820. The pines he cut on the stream came into the upper end of the mill and a crew drew others from the Piscataquis River into the lower end of the mill. River drivers rafted the milled lumber to the Bangor market.

Logging in this drainage ended abruptly when the October 1825 fire engulfed it.² Boyd's mill, the Kilmar-nock Mill, was still standing on Schoodic Stream in July 1826, but the 1825 fire destroyed most of the area's pines.³ The mill soon closed and the owner, N. Hatch, moved its saws to Bangor in 1831. The next known sawing operation at the site was in 1858. The fire left small, unburned pockets, but Medford and Lake View townships were like Seboeis township, where 200 acres of tiny plots existed out of roughly 25,000 acres; there was nothing left to attract lumbermen.

Lumbermen began returning to the drainage about 50 years later. The birch that grew into the burn attracted the most loggers; a few others were interested in maturing softwood. At about the time the birch mills came on line, so did the excelsior mills that used the poplar. By the late 1870s lumbermen were also cutting the white pine (pine) that grew in the burn. Crews drove the pine and poplar across Schoodic Lake and down Schoodic Stream. In the early 1880s the pulp and paper mills began to open on the lower Penobscot River and their loggers sought the poplar.

Birch operations

The one Lake View township settler was west of the upper end of Schoodic Lake, and Medford township settlers stayed close to the Piscataquis River, leaving the area north of the river corridor to those with logging interests. Once the birch matured, the first mill to saw it was

1 Moses Greenleaf, Maine's highly regarded early map maker, used the label "Schootum Lake" for what is now labeled "Schoodic Lake." "Schootum Lake" translated as Trout Lake, which was an early name used by settlers for what is now commonly labeled Endless Lake. John Charles Huden, author of *Indian Place Names of New England* (1899), wrote that "Schoodic" translated as "trout place" and perhaps "point of land," and was frequently used.

2 Chapter one has the details of the fire.

3 *Bangor Register*, July 6, 1826

the Jeremiah Fenno mill in Milo in 1878. Some of the birch came from Lake View township and some might have come from the eastern portion of Milo township or the western portion of Medford township. A. Bradeen had a mill at the southeast corner of Schoodic Lake operating by at least 1882. The Merrick birch mill opened on the southwest corner of Schoodic Lake in 1889 and drew nearly all its birch from Lake View township. By the second decade of the 1900s a birch mill was operating at

ary lines. The map he produced showed three roads: one from the foot of the lake to either Milo or Brownville or both, another from Five Islands (Rand Cove) to Seboeis Lake, and the Nahmakanta Tote Road crossed the northwest corner of the township.⁴ The only dwelling in the township was Elijah Norton's farm on the Nahmakanta Tote Road. The roads indicate some logging activity within the township.

The McCrillis Lake View township lot map, produced



From about 1907 to 1925 Lombard log haulers brought birch across Schoodic Lake to the Lake View village mill. A round trip required a water and coal fueling stop on the east side of the lake at the Outlet Camp near Adams siding on the B&A. (courtesy of Fred Trask)

Hardy Pond just off the northwest corner of Medford township in Lake View township. Across the Piscataquis River and by 1889 a mill in Medford Center was also cutting birch, some of which teamsters hauled across the river from the north.

In 1870 McCrillis, who owned the west half and undivided shares of the east half of Lake View township, hired Charles A. Barker to survey the township bound-

before 1881, included a number of roads and logging camps, most of which were presumably associated with either white birch or poplar. The Medford Road that left from the foot of the lake at the mouth of the cove leading to the outlet went southerly, presumably to the Piscataquis River ferry. When the Bangor and Aroostook

⁴ McCrillis Family Papers; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

Railroad (B&A) built the Medford Cutoff in 1907 the tracks appear to have followed this road.

From the foot of Schoodic Lake the White Birch Road, which came from the birch mill in Milo,⁵ continued east to the first bog on Bog Brook, where road fingers reached northerly into lot 33. Immediately east of the bog Lord's Supply Road of 1883 came north, probably from the mouth of Schoodic Stream at the Piscataquis River, and continued north to Whitney Bog (Turtle Pond), where it turned west to the Lord camp at its outlet on Schoodic Lake. At Whitney Bog a road went southeast to a web of roads and another set of Lord camps on the eastern edge of lot 24 on Lake View township's east town line; the road's terminus to the east is unknown. A road connected Schoodic Lake at Five Islands to Seboeis Lake. The only other roads plotted were from the Nahmakanta Tote Road on the northwest side of Schoodic Lake, one to the cove east of the Elijah Norton Farm, and the other from the farm northeast to the lakeside opposite the large island.

When loggers cut the first birch around the lake for a spool wood mill is unknown, but the teamsters of Jeremiah Fenno and Sons hauled in 1878 to their Milo village mill. In December, Richard Griffin, a teamster for a logging camp on Schoodic Lake, lost a pair of horses crossing the lake. The loaded sled sank with the horses, suggesting it was probably loaded with birch as opposed to softwood that floats.⁶ A year later loggers cut birch on Schoodic Lake and hauled it to the Milo village mill, probably on the White Birch Road, the most direct route.⁷

The McCrillis lot map had a number of presumed cutting camps, other than just the Lord camps, operating by 1883.⁸ The "White Birch Camps" were on the White Birch Road near its junction with the Medford Road. The Holbrook camps were above the bog on Bog Brook. The J. Thissel camp was on the west shore at the end of the road northeast from the Norton Farm. R. Osgood and B.E. Rollins were on the east shore of the lake,

but whether or not these sites were logging-related is unknown.

Getting on and off lake ice with loaded sleds could be difficult. To ease getting off the ice onto the White Birch Road, the loggers built a sloping log structure angled into the lake that the horse teams used. The old McCrillis map shows a roadway where the teams came off the ice on the south side of the outlet, the same location that still has visible log work extending into the lake and not toward the closest shore, which if it did, would suggest an old dam site. The horses continued on down the Medford or White Birch Road to Medford Center or Milo village.

The position of the Lord camps in the northeast quadrant of Lake View township reflected the distances lumbermen were willing to have teamsters haul birch. His camp on the east shore of Seboeis was 15 miles from Milo and it was another 3 miles to his camp on the east town line. His supply road from the Piscataquis River was 10 miles long. The only possible tree other than birch he might have cut would have been poplar, which he could have driven; however, the pulp and paper industry was in its infancy and poplar was readily available in areas nearer the mills. Given his distance from Milo, he might have had a birch mill at his Seboeis camp. Consequently, the roads running east of Seboeis Lake might have only been haul roads and not connected to anything farther east. The West Branch of Seboeis Stream was 3 miles away.

The only known early mills to develop in the watershed were mills that sawed primarily birch. When the birch mill at the outlet of Schoodic Lake opened is unknown, as is its location that was probably near the cove's exit to the White Birch Road. A. Bradeen of Milo owned and operated the mill in 1882, the year it burned. It seems likely that Bradeen or someone else rebuilt it as loggers continued to cut birch. Once the teamsters hauled the birch to Milo village, the mill cut it into the square four-foot bars of various dimensions from which machines, not in Milo village in the early years, turned the spools. The Milo village mill dried the sticks before shipping them south for turning.

By 1881 Searsport Spool and Block Company (SS&B) bought 9,000 acres bordering Schoodic Lake from McCrillis; the land included all that in the western half of Lake View township and lots 16, 18, 24, and 30, all in the eastern half of the township. In addition to cutting 8,000 cords of birch, they also cut pine, hemlock, and spruce.

⁵ The road's exact route is unknown, but that part of the road that is mapped is not part of the current Lake View Road from Milo. The road probably took the flattest route, which was south-southwest from the foot of the lake to the Medford Village Road east of Milo and then into Milo.

⁶ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, December 23, 1878

⁷ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, March 10, 1879 and McCrillis Family Papers, "Lake View lot map;" available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

⁸ McCrillis papers have a number of Lake View lot maps and the 1883 date is on one of them.

The crew in February 1882 included 84 men and 42 horses.⁹ They drove the pine and spruce down Schoodic Stream to their new mill (two stories and 45 by 98 feet) on the Piscataquis River at Howland village.¹⁰ The fact that they drove Schoodic Stream suggests a dam at the foot of Schoodic Lake was in place at the time.

How SS&B moved their birch to a mill is unknown. Their Howland mill was at a minimum 16 miles from the south end of Schoodic Lake. The mill cut the birch into bars, dried them, and sent them to the spool turning mill at Searsport. Alternatively, they might have used the Bradeen mill and rafted the birch on the pine also destined for their Howland mill. Loggers used the rafting strategy elsewhere in the Piscataquis watershed, but it was risky. As another option, teamsters for SS&B might have hauled birch to Bradeen's mill and, after a first cut, hauled it to Milo village where the Fenno mill cut it into bars. From here the bars would have gone via the B&A to Searsport. (The B&A reached Milo village in 1869.)

SS&B sold its Lake View township properties May 25, 1886 to Sprague and James Adams, long before loggers exhausted the birch supply.¹¹ Perhaps the company sold because of the distance from their Howland village mill or the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) did not extend their line into Lake View township as soon as the company had anticipated. The Adams brothers were landowners with logging interests and they continued to sell stumpage.

By January 1888 the Merrick Thread Company gained control of Schoodic Lake birch stumpage on the Adams' land and leased the land at the foot of the lake for its large mill that opened that spring.¹² The CPR reached the southern tip of Schoodic Lake in 1889. In 1891 Merrick built a second mill on Schoodic Lake, this one at Five Islands. Teamsters probably hauled the birch that crews cut in the northeast corner of Lake View township to the mill at Five Islands.¹³ With the opening of the Merrick mills and the company's control of the birch stump-

age, the Bradeen mill site probably closed. It is unknown when Merrick or its successor, ATCo (1898), built the mill at Hardy Pond on the CPR.¹⁴ Deductive reasoning suggests a mill probably formed in the 1890s, after the CPR passed close to the south edge of the pond, much like one did in 1890 at its Seboeis Stream crossing.

The Adams sold one-third interest in their Lake View township holdings in July 1891 to Frank Drummond.¹⁵ At this time Drummond was the Willimantic Thread Company's Maine agent and treasurer. Drummond had a birch operation in Lake View township on Seboeis Lake in 1895. His birch mill was on the east shore at an unknown location. Teamsters hauled the cut to and stacked it at the B&A's Drummond siding (Schoodic siding), at the northwest corner of Schoodic Lake.¹⁶ (The B&A finished the tracks in this area in late 1893.) The birch probably went to the Willimantic, Maine mill, which was also buying birch from Seboeis township to the east of Lake View township.

In February 1895 Thomas J. Stewart and Company cut birch on Schoodic Lake, probably for the Merrick mill.¹⁷ This company had operated birch mills at Orneville and Milo villages over a number of years. Some place on the B&A between Ingalls and Perkins sidings was a Stewart siding, which the company probably used when shipping birch to its mills.

Birch milling never let up when Merrick merged with other spool wood companies and became American Thread Company (ATCo) in 1902. ATCo maintained the Lake View village mill, had a large spool mill in Milo village, and closed (1902) the one in Willimantic, Maine. If the Hardy Pond mill was already operating, then it continued to do so. Stumpage accounts suggest the mill was in operation by at least 1913 and *The Piscataquis Observ-*

9 *The Maine Mining and Industrial Journal*, February 24, 1882, p.120

10 *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, December 16, 1881

11 Piscataquis Registry of Deeds and Vinal's assessment of 1885 noted that other lots have birch, poplar, pine, and ash as primary trees for harvest. (McCrillis Family Papers; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections)

12 *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, January 5, 1888

13 McCrillis Family Papers, stumpage records for ATCo; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

14 *The Industrial Journal*, February 1911

15 Piscataquis County Register of Deeds

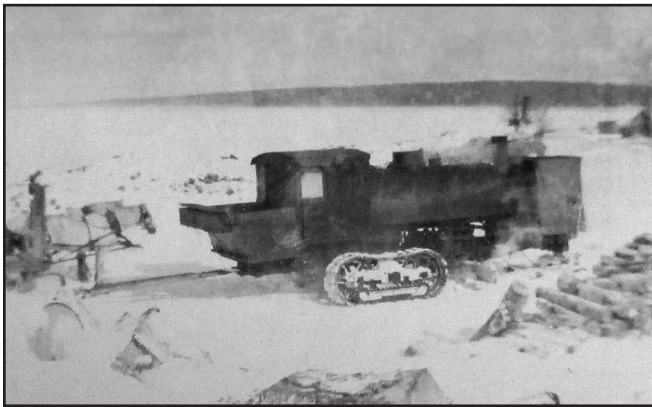
16 *The Industrial Journal*, February 22, 1895 The B&A literature listed a Drummond Siding below Ingalls Siding, but gave no specific location. It might have been an early name for Schoodic Siding, since this siding had access to Schoodic Lake at its northwest corner. The other possible landing, but not on the B&A, was the CPR's Schoodic Siding on the hillside above Knight's Landing on the west side of Schoodic Lake. James White's, *Altitudes in the Dominion of Canada with a Relief map of North America* lists the siding at 502 feet in elevation and that matches that of the CPR at Knight's Landing.

17 *The Industrial Journal*, February 22, 1895. In 1889 his company took over the Parker and Bailey spool and excelsior mill in Milo village. After Thomas' death in November 1892, his sons sold to Boston Excelsior Company.

er had a notice that loggers cut at Hardy Pond in 1915.¹⁸ Working in the mill about that time was Junie Dugans, who lived with his wife and eight of thirteen children in Chester on a road 2 miles northwest of the village schoolhouse. During the sawing season he lived in the mill's boarding house and went home on the weekends.¹⁹

McCrillis stumpage records revealed that ATCo loggers cut birch, fir, cedar, and pine. According to the records for 1906 to 1917, teamsters probably hauled the birch cut from Lake View township's northeast corner in 1908, 1909, 1911, 1912, and 1913 to the mill at Five Islands. Beginning in 1913 most of the logs cut were from the southeast corner of the township and the vast majority of the cut was spruce, pine, and fir, and typically only 1,500 cords of birch compared to 3,000–5,500 from 1908–1910. The birch was probably sawed into bolts at the Hardy Pond mill. The softwood logs went to Lake View, where a crew took them from the water and loaded them on railroad cars for the Milo village mill. At some point the ATCo mills began to manufacture their own wooden boxes from the boxwood (second growth pine) company crews cut.

Moving the birch from the stump to a mill changed over time. Initially horses and barges did the hauling, but the horses only hauled when the ice was thick enough to support a loaded sled and horse team. In 1893 Merrick Company teamsters had five horse teams break through the ice, but they were able to save them.²⁰ Once the ice



ATCo mill with its mill village, both on the southwest corner shore of Schoodic Lake, had near universal control over logging and other activity in Lake View township from 1889 to 1925, a time when teamsters first delivered the birch logs and later Lombard log haulers. (courtesy of Fred Trask)

was gone, crews loaded the remainder of the winter cut on barges towed by steamboats. This strategy allowed the loggers to cut and saw a little later into the spring, until there was no longer enough snow in the woods for the horse-drawn sleds.²¹ The towing was generally completed by early summer and the outlying mills closed until early winter when cutting resumed.

Sometime after 1902 ATCo transitioned from using 25 teams of horses to pull the sleds of birch to the Lake View village mill and began using Lombard log haulers. The earliest picture of a log hauler connected to this operation was 1912–1913.²² No matter where they hauled from, most of their route was across the lake's ice; no haul roads followed the shore near the edge to the Lake View village mill. ATCo Lombards burned coal and could not make a round trip to the outlet and back without refueling. Assuming the Lombards did not haul coal to distant coal sheds, only two camps had access to a railroad, hence, a coal supply, Outlet Camp and Rand Cove Camp at Five Islands.²³

If ATCo was using coal-fired Lombards before 1907, then the logical means for coal delivery was the CPR to the Outlet Camp, which might have been the old White Birch Camp on McCrillis' map. After 1907 the B&A's new Medford-cutoff provided service to the east side of Schoodic Lake with sidings at the outlet (Adams) and Rand Cove. The Outlet camp was in the vicinity of Adams Siding and had a coal shed and water tower for refilling the steamer's boiler.²⁴ Coal transportation from Bangor would have been more direct, coming via the B&A as opposed to the CPR. The access from the lake to Adams is a short climb greater than two percent, the maximum grade for a Lombard with a load, but they arrived here with empty sleds.

No map shows the Lombard's entry point to the Lake View village mill, but pictures show them loaded and unloaded on land near the mill building.²⁵ One old map shows their garage location on the south edge of the mill property. The ATCo fire protection system map shows the garage with a round circle in front of it.²⁶ This

18 *The Piscataquis Observer*, March 25, 1915

19 conversation with Carolyn Brown, Dugans' granddaughter

20 *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, January 27, 1893

21 William Sawtell, *A History of Lake View Maine* (Milo, ME: Milo Printing Company, 1985)

22 Fred Trask picture collection

23 Some early Lombards did burn wood.

24 old photo held by Fred Trask of Milo village; it shows land sloped to the lake, the lake, and the water tower and coal shed

25 courtesy of Fred Trask

26 courtesy of Fred Trask

probably represents a turntable on which a crew turned around the Lombards. They had insufficient room on the mill property to turn around under their own power.

By 1907 moving cut trees from the watershed and those abutting was easy with encircling rail lines. The CPR had sidings at Hardy Pond, Lake View, and Schoodic (above Knight's Landing) on the lake's south edge. The B&A's Medford Cutoff with sidings at Adams and Rand Cove served the eastern portion of the township and beyond. On the west side of the township the B&A had Ebeemee, Schoodic, Packards, and West Seboeis sidings.

About 1920 the ATCo birch supply had dwindled and demand was beginning to subside. The company closed the Five Islands mill in 1921. In August 1925 the main mill at Lake View village shut down and all milling shifted to Milo village. The reason given for the closing was the drop in demand and the movement to cardboard boxes instead of wooden boxes. When ATCo shut down its operation at Hardy Pond is unknown.

By the time ATCo closed in 1925 the acres around Schoodic Lake were probably nearly devoid of merchantable trees. The birch that seeded in after the cut in the first decade of the century would not yet have matured for another cut. It took 40 years for the birch to rejuvenate into a mature enough tree for spool wood.

Without cutting records for Milo and Medford townships, the full extent of the birch operations in the southern part of the Schoodic drainage is speculative. With birch mills in Milo opening in 1878, the owner might have initially bought nearby stumpage in Milo and Medford townships. In 1888 when Merrick began building mills on Schoodic Lake, the Milo mills, which had drawn their supply from that area, found another source of birch, perhaps in eastern Milo. Some portion of their birch stock came by railcars from Lagrange. The Hardy Pond birch mill was so close to the northeast corner of Medford township that land owners there might have sold birch stumpage to the mill owners. Birch loggers for the Medford Center mill entered the area north of the Piscataquis River, cut, and hauled the birch south to their mill beginning in 1889 or earlier. This mill was still cutting spool stock in 1922, but the source of its birch is unknown.

Logging operations with log drives

Poplar and pine were two other trees that grew into the burn and loggers began to return to cut them in the early 1880s. They drove their logs with the aid of one dam

at the foot of Schoodic Lake. The dam near the mouth of Schoodic Stream only supported the sawmill.²⁷ The first mills to use poplar were the excelsior mills, like the large one in Milo village. A few years later the developing pulp and paper mills, like Howland Pulp and Paper Company in Howland village, began operating. The pine was generally not first quality, but by the 1890s the spool companies harvested it, referred to in stumpage reports as boxwood, for the boxes they made for shipping spools. Lumber mills were also harvesting it.

McCrillis' selection of the dam site at the outlet of Schoodic Lake was a strategic one. A large cove extending east from the southeast corner of the north-south axis of the lake provided protection for log booms towed into it. Beyond the well-defined water edge at the foot of the cove water drained through a short, broad, open, swampy, rocky, flat, shallow area to its exit.²⁸ If McCrillis built his dam at the head of this, then his sluiced logs entered the channel-less flat area that he would have had to line with boom logs²⁹ and keep flooded using water from the dam. McCrillis did what many lumbermen did on other bodies of water; built his dam at the foot of the channel-less area, where the current dam is. The dam, with an extensive side dam that is still visible on the south side, flooded out the shallow area and enabled drivers to tow the boom bags to the dam. If the flooded area was too shallow for a towboat, a headworks anchored at the dam could pull the boom bag into the dam area. A crew made the current channel through the rocks after the last of the log drives.³⁰

Loggers, who used headworks to move logs across open bodies of water elsewhere in Maine, may never have used such on this lake. Beginning in 1861, before any of the softwood regrowth in the 1825 burn matured, a steamboat capable of handling 300 tourists or towing a boom bag was available.

27 A search for a legislative act authorizing a dam or stream improvements anyplace on this drainage yielded nothing.

28 The short narrows is at the current bridge. A bulldozer made the channel, currently visible from the bridge, through the rocks, after the log drives ceased.

29 If one stands on the bridge spanning the cove, looks toward the lake, and focuses on the south edge (left side) about 200 feet west of the bridge, one sees old log work that angles to the west as opposed to directly across the channel. If these logs were part of a dam, then they would be pointed directly at the opposite bank. This is perhaps where the teamsters exited the lake for the Medford or White Birch roads.

30 conversation with Fred Trask

When McCrillis had someone build the log-driving dam at the outlet is unknown, but some clues do exist. The Walter Wells Water Commission report of 1868 indicated the lake did not have a dam. Given the fire of 1825 and no early settlement at the lake's outlet, no one would have invested in a dam until someone wanted to drive Schoodic Stream. The potential need was not present until perhaps the 1870s, when lumbermen began re-

open and close the dam's gates at specified times each day during the spring. When McCrillis sold the west half of Lake View township to SS&B in 1882, he retained the 50 acres surrounding the dam and negotiated the right to raise the lake level by two feet. He wanted to insure that he could drive logs from his unsold property. In 1881 and 1882 SS&B conducted a drive on the stream.

How the drive boss managed the drive on Schoodic



Lumber baron William McCrillis made a strategic decision to not sell the boggy end of Schoodic Lake and his rights to the Schoodic Lake dam on that land until his heirs did so in 1923, a decision that continued to preserve it for log drivers. (photo from a Bill Geller exploration)

turning. In February 1878 Charles Moore had a lumber camp near the west side of Schoodic Lake off the Nahmakanta Tote Road and beyond the Elijah Norton farm. His 21 men with six horses were cutting quality pine and had 400,00 board feet by late February.³¹ In late May his drive was hung on Schoodic Stream. Given the size of Schoodic Lake, the short length of the stream, and a usual spring water level, it would seem unlikely that a dam was present in 1878. In March 1882 A. Bradeen, who had a mill at the outlet, received permission from McCrillis to

Stream is a matter of speculation for driving either saw logs or pulpwood. Without a dam the lumberman may have had his cut hauled across the ice to the outlet and held in a boom until ice went out in the stream, usually earlier than the lake. A few sticks of dynamite could loosen the ice on which the logs rested. Such a position would enable the drive boss to maximize his use of high water as opposed to waiting for ice out in the lake and then booming the logs across the lake to move them into the stream. With a dam to control the stream-flow, a logger might have landed on and boomed across the lake.

³¹ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, February 23, 1878 and May 27, 1878. Stetson's of Bangor sold them the stumpage.

The drive did not start until the drive boss knew that his logs had time enough to all exit the stream into the Piscataquis River and reach the Penobscot River without getting mixed in with another log drive. He could not start the drive and then have enough space to hold all the logs behind a boom or at the sawmill dam at the mouth of the stream before entering the Piscataquis River.

The length of the stream is short and by 1883 a tote road paralleled it, so a drive boss operated from a single drive camp and spread out his crew along the stream to keep the logs moving and jams from forming. Given the size of the stream, the crew probably only worked during daylight and did not sluice through the night.

In the 2 miles worth of deadwaters, where the current could scatter any size log, the men might have used small bateaux or log rafts and side booms to manage the passage of logs. A portion of the crew was at the sawmill dam to prevent jams. Once on the Piscataquis River the drive boss set a boom someplace above the Howland village dam to collect the logs before driving them into the Penobscot, where the crew would reboom them before continuing down river.

Enough loggers continued to cut saw logs in the Schoodic drainage to warrant the maintenance of the dam until perhaps the first decade of the 20th century. In 1885 Orin Templeton had a lumber camp on Schoodic Lake; three men died of diphtheria. In the spring of that year Stanchfield used his steamboat to tow boom bags.³² In 1887 the E.L. (Zeke) Chase drive on the stream started May 26 and reached the Penobscot River by June 2; he did not incur a low water problem as did the other drives on the Piscataquis watershed. Late that same year Z.B. Knight also cut on the lake.³³ In 1896 James McNulty drove a million board feet of pine logs cut around Schoodic Lake down Schoodic Stream.³⁴ Also in that year A.J. and W.E. Weymouth cut pine on Schoodic Stream and drove it to the Piscataquis River.³⁵

Some harvested poplar went to market on the stream and some probably went by train. In mid-May 1902 Fred M. Strout of Milo drove poplar from Schoodic Lake to the boom in the Penobscot River.³⁶ A year later in early April Strout was back driving poplar on Schoodic

Stream from Schoodic Lake.³⁷ For the cutting seasons of 1912–1916 N.B. Gray cut poplar in the southeast quadrant of Lake View township, the Hardy Pond area. This was probably loaded on railcars at Hardy Pond siding, site of a birch mill, as opposed to a crew driving it on a waterway.

In 1916 the Jordan Lumber Company of Bangor sought permission from the McCrillis heirs to rebuild the dam and raise the water. The heirs replied that they did not have authority to give permission, but they would not impose any objections.³⁸ What action Jordan Lumber company took is undiscovered. The company, which milled spruce, pine, and fir, was probably interested in such trees as it was in the next watershed east, Seboeis.

Jordan Lumber Company's interest in making the dam functional suggests that the stream had not been driven in some time, probably since the poplar drives in the first decade of the century. The number of acres with access to Schoodic Lake is small and would not contain enough trees to support large cutting operations for years in a row. ATCo had no need to drive logs; they hauled birch and soft wood to the CPR or Milo village.

In 1923 the McCrillis heirs sold the dam lot and dam rights to John Kelley of Advance Bag and Paper Company of Howland.³⁹ That deed noted that a crew rebuilt the dam in 1921.⁴⁰ Whether Advance Bag and Paper Company ever had a drive on Schoodic Stream remains undiscovered. The company, which continued to operate until 1939, sold the dam and dam rights in December 1930 to the Bangor Hydro Electric Company.

The selling of the dam to an entity other than one with logging interests suggested that water was no longer needed in support of a saw-log or pulpwood drive after 1930. If more drives followed, then they would have been small enough to reach the Piscataquis River on the spring freshet. Loggers would not want to have depended on Bangor Hydro to regulate the water level in support of their drives; this was now a water storage lake for the hydro company, not a reservoir for a spring log drive.

³⁷ *The Piscataquis Observer*, April 9, 1903

³⁸ This correspondence is in McCrillis Family Papers; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections. They probably could not give permission because they did not own all the property around the lake. No records suggested Jordan Lumber Company sought a legislative charter for the dam's rights.

³⁹ Piscataquis County Registry of Deeds

⁴⁰ The company replaced the three-gate crib dam with a three-gate cement dam. (Fred Trask, Schoodic Lake dam tender)

³² *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, May 21, 1885

³³ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, November 21, 1887

³⁴ *The Industrial Journal*, February 14, 1896

³⁵ *The Industrial Journal*, April 3, 1896

³⁶ *The Piscataquis Observer*, May 15, 1902

Hence, loggers had little left to harvest. By the time the regrowth was of interest to loggers, the river driving days had ended. Those with memories dating back to the late 1940s and early 1950s had no recollections of logs being driven out of the lake.

Logging around Schoodic Lake did not completely stop once ATCo vacated the area in 1925. Schoodic Lake Company ran a sawmill some place on the township, presumably near the lake, from soon after the ATCo closing until 1930 when Atlas Pulpwood Corporation took over and milled through about 1933. The locations of and what both mills cut are unknown. The mill was perhaps the vacated ATCo mill at Lake View village. The continued use of a mill suggested lumbermen felt it was more economical to mill on the lake and ship by rail than conduct a log drive. No other mills opened in Lake View township following the closing of the Atlas operations.

Prior to the 1940s no one had cut pulpwood in the southeast quadrant of T4R9 N.W.P. that includes part of Seboeis Lake with access to Schoodic Lake at Five Islands. When they did cut c.1949, teamsters hauled it to West Seboeis and put it on train cars. The cruiser's report implied that any cut on the east side of T4R9 N.W.P. should be hauled to West Seboeis as opposed to driven through the Schoodic Lake waterways or down the West Branch of Seboeis Stream.⁴¹

Some early drives on Schoodic Stream went to the sawmill just above the stream's mouth at the Piscataquis River. In 1858 J. Hickborn had a sawmill at the Boyd site.⁴² In 1876 the site was known as "Coffin's Mill on Schoodic Stream."⁴³ *The Piscataquis Observer* of May 4, 1876 referred to the site as Schoodic Mills. In that year John Smart and his two sons, Will and Earnest, along with John DeWitt, ran a raft of milled lumber to Bangor.

The mill was still operating in 1906 with H.P. Lovejoy and Guy Dean as proprietors. It was not a big operation, but it had been active for many years. The Lovejoy family of Medford dated back to the 1850s. Some time after 1880 the family bought up a sizable portion of land extending from the mill site in a wide swath on both sides of Schoodic Stream to the Medford north town line. The mill was still running in 1951 and the family still retained its extensive land holdings.⁴⁴ It seems likely that they cut on their lands and drove the stream. By 1941 the other major land holders were: Maine Land Corporation, Dutch Land Company, P.R.P. Company, F. Laugh-ton, and Everett Marshall.⁴⁵ When the mill received its last logs via Schoodic Stream is undiscovered. These were the last drives on Schoodic Stream.

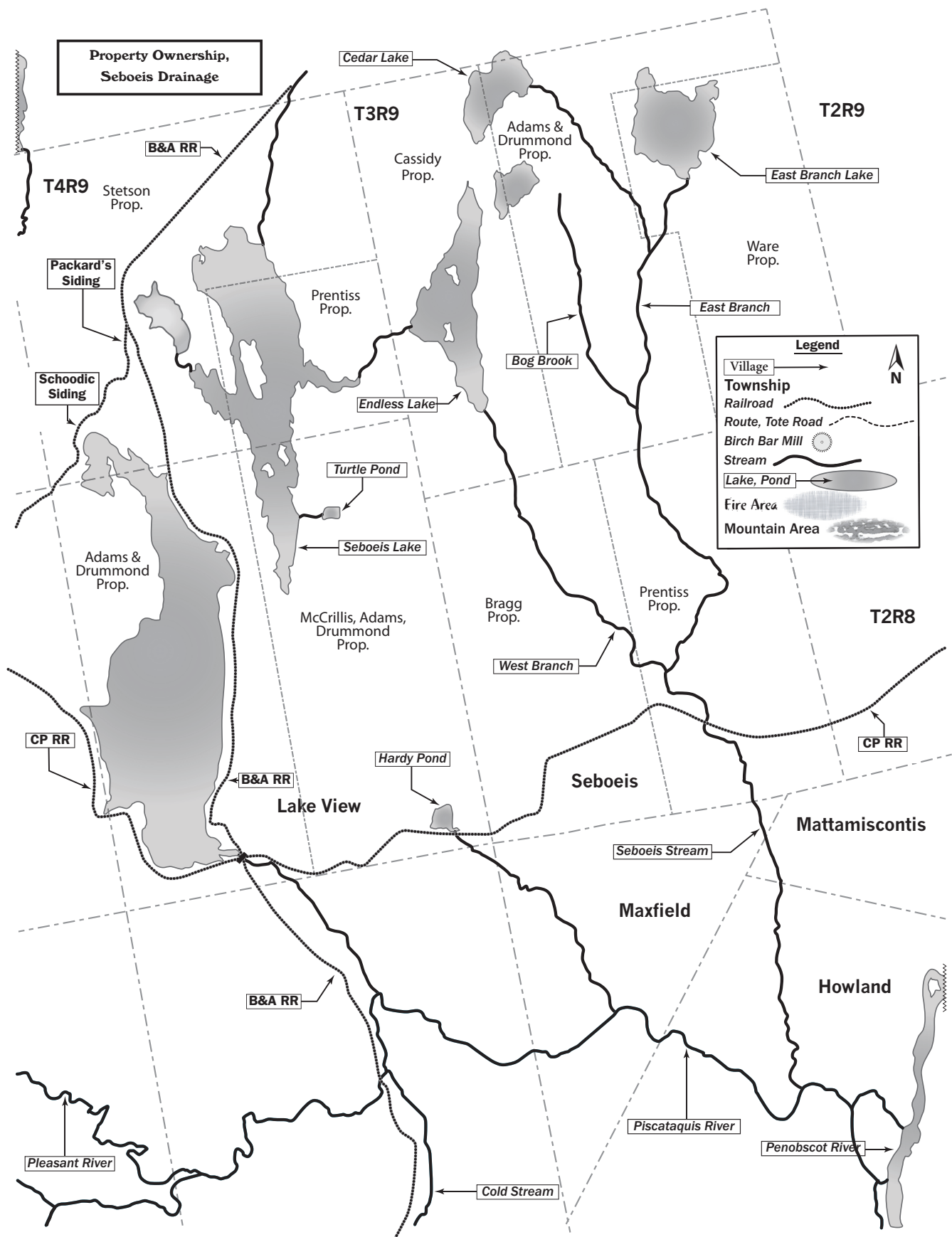
41 Prentiss Papers: available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

42 H.F. Walling, *Map of Piscataquis County* (New York: Lee and Marsh, 1858)

43 *The Piscataquis Observer*, May 4, 1876

44 *The Maine Register, State Year-book and Legislative Manual, 1950–1951*

45 a map: "Medford Township Piscataquis County, Maine, 1941," James W. Sewall Company



Chapter 6: Seboeis Stream drainage

The drainage

Seboeis Stream flows south into the Piscataquis River 2 miles above the Howland village dam near the Penobscot River.¹ The stream's drainage includes Howland township, its northern neighbor Seboeis township, and above that T3 and T4R9 N.W.P.. The West Branch of Seboeis Stream (West Branch) and the East Branch of Seboeis Stream (East Branch) are Seboeis Stream's main tributaries. The West Branch rises in Long A township above T4R9 N.W.P., drains through the West Seboois settlement at the head of Seboeis Lake that flows into Endless Lake, and exits it moving south for 6.7 miles to its junction with the East Branch, 1.5 miles above the Seboeis mill community. The East Branch headwaters rise at the north edge of T3R9 N.W.P. in Cedar Lake and flow through Cedar Brook 4.25 miles to the head of Gray Ledge Deadwater on the East Branch, where the south-flowing 1.6 mile outlet brook of East Branch Lake enters, 9 miles above the junction of the East and West branches. The Seboeis mill community, which is near Seboeis village at the southern foot of Whitney Ridge, is 9 miles by stream to the Piscataquis River.

Only clues exist on exactly when loggers began cutting on Seboeis Stream. The earliest loggers cut only top-quality white pine (pine). Given the cutting records on the lower end of the Piscataquis River, it is likely someone cut pine on the stream prior to 1800. The loggers before 1825 probably stayed below the junction of the east and west branches, and relied on the spring run off to move logs down the stream. Alexander Greenwood's 1820 field survey of Seboeis township's southern and eastern boundary mentioned burnt land and some pine, but of poor quality.² R. Holden's 1812 survey of Maxfield

township also mentions burnt land, but whether or not the burned lands mentioned by Greenwood and Holden were of the same fire is unknown.³

Logging operations all but ceased after the fire of 1825 engulfed much of the drainage. It burned through the townships of Howland, Maxfield, Mattamiscontis, Seboeis, Lake View, T3 and T4R9 N.W.P., and Long A (TA R8 & R9 W.E.L.S.), and destroyed vast quantities of pine, leaving a few scattered, standing clusters. Loggers soon cut those below the south town line of Seboeis township to meet local needs.⁴

Bangor lumbermen Charles Stetson, Henry E. Prentiss, William Hayford, Sprague and John Adams, Isaac M. Bragg, and Frank A. Wilson began to have a renewed interest in the drainage in the early to mid-1860s. They envisioned what the timber might be in future years and began to buy the land. In 1863 Stetson bought all but the southeast quadrant of T4R9 N.W.P. and Prentiss bought the southeast quadrant. The Stetsons apparently did not issue any stumpage contracts until 1892. In 1864 Prentiss began exploring the drainage with a three-day visit to his southeast quadrant, where he found loggers had already cut white ash for shovel handles. A year later Prentiss had Haley assess the area and he informed Prentiss that he would not cut in the quadrant due to the expense of the drive. That same year Prentiss, accompanied by Abner DeWitt, came north on a logger's road that reached the outlet of Endless Lake; his interest was in the east half of T3R8 N.W.P. (Seboeis township). He learned that Levi Lancaster Jr. was cutting "some fair size saplings." By 1874 the Prentiss family was managing the eastern half and offering stumpage contracts.⁵

available at Maine State Archives

3 R. Holden, *Field Notes Maxfield township, 1812*; available at Maine State Archives

4 The known details of the 1825 fire are in chapter one.

5 Henry E. Prentiss was born in 1804 and died in 1873. His three children, Abigail, John, and Henry M., continued to manage the

1 In the Abenaki language "Seboeis" means "small river" or "little waterway." (Fanny Hardy Eckstorm, *Indian Place-names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast* (1941))

2 Alexander Greenwood, *Field Notes Seboeis Township, 1820*:

In 1874 Bragg and Wilson began buying up the west half of T3R8 N.W.P. North of T3R8 N.W.P. in T3R9 N.W.P. in 1881, Sprague and John Adams bought the James Hunnewell⁶ Tract, the center third of the township, from William B. Hayford and honored two outstanding stumpage contracts. One was with Ruben Lancaster and the other was with Henry Poor and Son of Medway. Four years later Drummond bought an undivided one third of the Adams' properties. John Cassidy gained sole ownership of the western third of the township in 1886.

Logging on the watershed took place in three distinct sectors: (1) the northwest sector, the Seboeis Lake area; (2) the central sector, Endless Lake and the West Branch of Seboeis Stream to the Seboeis mill settlement; (3) and the northeast sector, Cedar and East Branch lakes, and the East Branch of Seboeis Stream to Seboeis Stream to the Piscataquis River.

The northwest sector: the Seboeis Lake area (T4R9 N.W.P.) and the northeast corner of Lake View township (T4R8 N.W.P.)

The West Branch drains the northwest sector and loggers did not reach the area until the 1870s. No known logging operations took place in the area prior to the 1825 fire that engulfed all of it. By the late 1870s birch loggers, coming overland from Milo, cut in the northeast quadrant of Lake View township and teamsters hauled the cut to a Milo village mill. In the early 1890s loggers were cutting at the head of Seboeis Lake. As soon as the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad (B&A) reached the northwest tip of Seboeis Lake in late 1893, loggers began cutting large amounts of birch. Soon thereafter loggers for the pulp and paper mills wanted the poplar and others cut pine, both of which river drivers took to market on the West Branch.

A few men, all of them in the business of selling stumpage, owned most of the land in this northwest sector. In 1863 George, Isaiah, and Charles Stetson bought all but the southeast quadrant of the T4R9 N.W.P. and family heirs did not begin to sell it off until the 1940s. Their available stumpage contracts began with the advent of the railroad. Henry E. Prentiss bought the southeast corner of T4R9 N.W.P. in 1863 and his heirs held it until

lands their father had amassed and made sales and purchases. Henry M. Prentiss, who died in 1906, had a son, Henry, born in 1872 and died in 1933.

⁶ James Hunnewell was from Charlestown, Massachusetts.

1930. He began issuing stumpage permits c.1870. John and Sprague Adams and Frank H. Drummond owned most of the northeast quadrant of Lake View township, a purchase from William McCrillis.⁷ Their stumpage contracts were not available, but birch from the land went overland to Milo village and softwood went south via the West Branch.

At least two loggers were cutting on the upper end of Seboeis Lake when the railroad arrived. A Stetson lease to Lewis Parks referred to Moses L. Jordan Sr., founder of Jordan Lumber Company of Old Town, with a camp at the mouth of The Inlet on the east side. After he vacated the camp, Thomas J. Stewart and Company used the camp until about 1895, when it became a sporting camp. Jordan's interests were typically in relation to saw logs and, were that true in this case, his crews would have driven the cut down the West Branch. Stewart was a Milo village spool mill owner in 1878 and the Boyd Lake spool mill owner in 1895; thus, if he cut birch before the railroad's completion, his teamsters hauled south to Milo village to either the mill or the rail line to his mill at Boyd Lake in Lagrange township.

The 1893 B&A rail line extension from Milo village to Norcross passed close to the northwest corners of Schoodic Lake, Northwest Pond, and Seboeis Lake, and the Schoodic (Drummond) and West Seboois⁸ sidings opened. In 1907 the B&A Medford Cutoff ran north between Schoodic and Seboeis lakes to intersect the B&A at Packard siding at the head of Northwest Pond. The rail lines connected the Milo village birch and excelsior mills, and the Old Town area pulp and paper mills, to this northwest sector.

Of the two early sidings, West Seboois developed as the predominant staging community for loggers, particularly those cutting birch. It was close to West Seboeis Stream and a mile above The Inlet that drains into the

⁷ Drummond made two purchases of an undivided third of the Sprague lands in 1881 and in 1885.

⁸ The spelling of Seboois with "oo" as opposed to "oe" was the spelling used by the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad. The Abenaki translation of "Seboois" is like that of Seboeis, "little stream." (John Charles Huden, author of *Indian Place Names of New England* (1899)) The Canadian Pacific Railroad spelled the same word with "oe," Seboeis. A review of maps at the Osher Map Library, University of Southern Maine offered the following: 1877 – Sebois, 1879–1899 Hubbard maps – Seeboois, 1881 – Sebocis, 1883 – Seboelsi, 1894 – Sebois, 1902 – Seboois, 1911 – Seboois; 1915 – Seboois, 1924 – Sebois, 1926 and after – Seboeis. For the lake and stream, Seboeis is the spelling in this text.

north end of Seboeis Lake. West Seboois, with its water tank, roundhouse wye, sidings, spur line to and through a ballast pit, and 18 switches, was the terminal for all rail traffic coming or going on the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) and was home for the railroad's section workers. By the time the railroad reached the area, the Stetsons had a road from the head of The Inlet (Upper Landing) to the siding; they charged a road use fee of \$25 per season for loggers not cutting on their land. Perhaps influencing the development at West Seboois was that members of the Stetson family served in key executive roles for the B&A and their stumpage contracts, which included required log loading at a siding on their land, reflected their railroad interests.

At some undiscovered early time, the Stetsons leased land to the B&A for the ballast spur line. It ran southerly for 2,500 feet from the southeast corner of West Seboois parallel to and on the west side of West Seboeis Stream to the start of the ballast pit. The pit's variable width was 2 to 3 hundred feet and it was about 2,900 feet long with the track continuing through it. In 1914 the B&A received a renewed lease that moved the start of the spur line to the T4R9 N.W.P. town line below West Seboois. The new tracks entered the pit at the same location as the previous line, and the lease extended the long narrow pit and tracks another 3000 feet on the same southerly axis; rent was a dollar per year for 25 years.

By 1895 two enterprising loggers and their wives had homes at West Seboois and took in boarders. Daniel S. and Mary Pomeroy maintained their operation through at least 1905.⁹ Daniel was a hunter and a guide and Mary was probably a logging camp cook. The other couple, Maggie O'Neil and James O'Neil, had a home capable of handling two boarders. James guided and logged from the siding by 1895. They lived year round at the siding until they moved away in 1904. Joining the community by 1899 was a Bangor couple, Lewis H. and Nellie Park. Lewis was a sawyer and operated a logging camp.¹⁰ The Parks were still there in 1910 with Lewis at 71 years of age cooking during the logging season at the boarding house.

West Seboois had two early mills, one of which was a wheel hub mill for wagon wheels. The mill site was four-tenths of a mile north of the West Seboois siding where the rail line swings back to Dean Brook. When the mill opened is unknown but it operated in at least 1908–11 according to a Chapman survey map and the U.S. Census. When Ray Goldback's grandfather moved to West Seboois in 1921 the mill had burned and had not been rebuilt. Wagon wheel hubs were typically made from ash, and that was a tree that grew in the 1825 burn in this area. Some wheelwrights also used ash for wheel spokes. Perhaps this site was in some way influenced by the nearby presence of the Nahmakanta Tote Road over which hundreds of wagons passed each year between c.1832 and 1900. In 1895 the closest wheelwright was W.W. Smith in Orneville village, which is south on the B&A from West Seboois.¹¹

West Seboois also had one of the two birch-cutting mills serving the northwest sector. Park built the steam-driven mill and was using it in 1899, when he approached the Prentiss family about cutting birch on their land, the southeast quadrant of T4R9 N.W.P.. The family refused his stumpage offer, so Park continued to cut on Stetson land and milled birch through 1901. Perkins and Danforth used the mill from 1902 through 1913. The mill probably closed following the 1913 sawing given the next purchaser of birch stumpage chose to build a set of siding tracks at Packard siding.

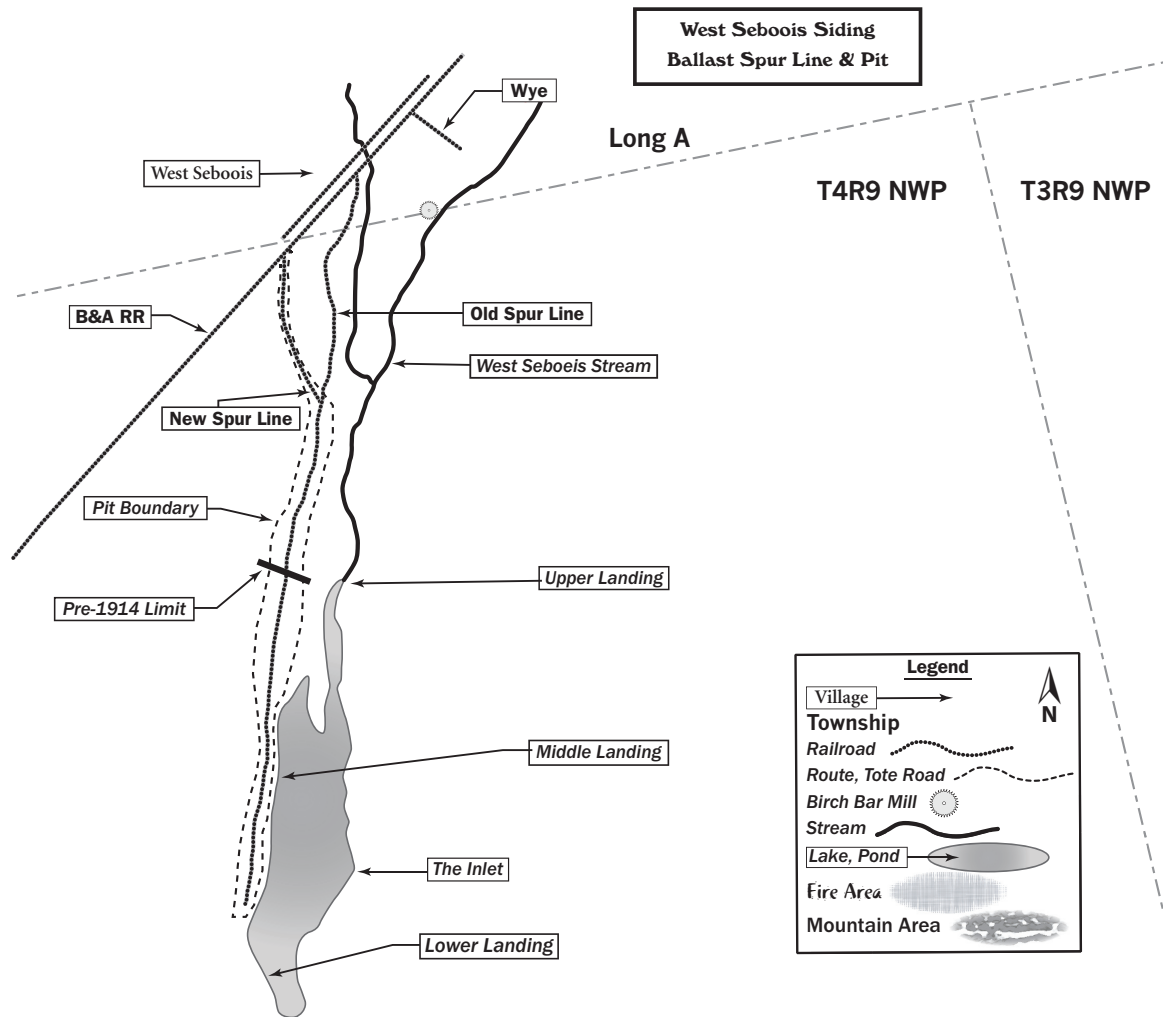
The Park mill was on the east side of West Seboois and less than a half-mile south of the siding's wye, near West Seboeis Stream, and on the road to Upper Landing. Rodney Cole, who grew up at West Seboois, used to play in the area, which was covered in sawdust, and near the junction of the Upper Landing and Endless Lake roads. Sometime in the early to mid-1950s the South Branch Lumber Company of Howland township flattened the old sawdust pile with a bulldozer and set up a sawmill that operated until about 1956, when the company moved it to the west side of the outlet of Endless Lake. He never found any other sawdust piles close to West Seboois, but he did discover remains of railroad ties and the old ballast pit.¹²

⁹ *The Maine Sportsman*, Vol. 5 no. 49 (September 1897): 23

¹⁰ William W. Geller, "Piscataquis Project: Sporting Camps in the Piscataquis River Watershed, Section A, North from Bangor to Milo and Brownville to the Eastern Portion of the Watershed" (2017). *Maine History Documents*. 123.
<https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistory/123>

¹¹ conversation with Rodney Cole and Ray Goldback and *The Maine Register, State Year-book and Legislative Manual, 1894–1895*

¹² conversations with West Seboois resident Rodney Cole and Seboeis village resident Carolyn Brown, who also summered on Endless Lake. Mrs. Brown remembered when the South Branch



The Park mill might have used the ballast pit spur line. Birch mills typically operated during the late winter months and closed once the ground thawed; thus, the operation might not have interfered with ballast mining. However, if this was the early practice, it apparently ended by 1915, when the B&A signed a five-year renewable lease for land for an additional set of siding tracks at Packard siding for U.S. Pegwood and Shank Company. Additionally, Perkins and Danforth last used the West Seboois mill in 1913 and the B&A changed the location of the spur line in 1914.

West Seboois grew in population and by the 1920s had a school, post office, and store. Over time three landings, upper (first landing), middle (second landing) and

lower (third landing), were in use on the east side of The Inlet. By the late 1940s the population was dwindling as road access became available.¹³

Harvesting of birch and other non-floating trees

Stetson and Prentiss bought their respective property in T4R9 N.W.P. in 1863, but, according to available stumpage reports, neither offered a contract for birch cutting until the mid-to-late 1890s. When Prentiss explored and bought the southeast quadrant of T4R9

¹³ Lumber Company moved in; prior to its arrival no old sawdust pile existed in the outlet area.

¹³ More information on the community is available in William W. Geller, "Piscataquis Project: Sporting Camps in the Piscataquis River Watershed, Section A, North from Bangor to Milo and Brownville to the Eastern Portion of the Watershed" (2017). *Maine History Documents*. 123. <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistory/123>

N.W.P., he knew that the birch was only one of a variety of trees that would have value upon maturity and he waited until 1897 to issue a cutting permit. The birch and poplar hid the pines, and other trees like ash, that were well away from the Seboeis Lake shore.¹⁴ He knew that if he had loggers cut enough trees to let the birch and pine grow, then he would have some valuable stumpage. Prentiss noted that in 1863 some white ash had already been cut for shovel handles, produced at probably a Brownville village mill. He may have viewed the ash cutting as akin to thinning, for in 1867 he offered his only stumpage permit between 1863 and 1874 to Leavitt and Ira Weymouth for white and black ash. Ash loggers were back again from 1880 through 1891 and in 1921.¹⁵

Once the B&A line opened between Milo village and Norcross in 1893, birch logging expanded dramatically. Prior to the opening, the closest birch mill was Bradeen's at the southeast corner of Schoodic Lake (1882) and the Merrick mill (1889) at Lake View village; both were about 14 miles down Seboeis and Schoodic lakes.

The earliest recorded birch logging was in the early 1880s in the northeast quadrant of Lake View township. By 1882 teamsters were traveling from Milo on the White Birch Road to the outlet of Schoodic Lake, where they continued north to the foot of Seboeis Lake and up its east side to Turtle Pond.

One of the first lumbermen to use the B&A's Schoodic (Drummond) siding at the head of Schoodic Lake was Drummond in 1895. In February his crew cut birch at a new mill on the lot that he and the Adams brothers owned on the southeastern shore of Seboeis Lake in Lake View township. Teamsters hauled the four-foot lengths across the ice, and stacked them at Drummond siding.¹⁶ He might have hauled to Drummond siding again in 1897, when he paid \$23.41 to the Stetsons, perhaps for use of the haul road from the lake to the siding or for a storage area near the railroad. The years of his mill's operation are unknown, as is its precise location.

Drummond's connection to birch extended beyond this land. At this time he was the Willimantic Thread Company's Maine agent and treasurer. After the company closed in 1902 and merged with others to become

American Thread Company (ATCo), Drummond and the Adams brothers sold stumpage to ATCo until the Lake View village mill ceased operation in 1925. ATCo loggers accessed the Adams and Drummond property around the south end of Seboeis Lake on a mile-long road from Five Islands (Rand Cove) on Schoodic Lake. After the closing of the ATCo mills on Schoodic Lake, the road deteriorated to what the area folks refer to as the "carry trail."

The Stetson T4R9 N.W.P. stumpage reports included birch.¹⁷ Their stumpage contract rarely specified lots; it defined a reasonable haul distance from a general area, identified the type of tree or trees and butt size, limited road cutting and hauling sleds, and protected new growth. All of the available Stetson stumpage agreements dictated hauling to a site on the B&A railroad.

The Stetsons' stumpage book did not list birch contracts for every year. In 1896 and 1897 Stewart and Company had contracts. The Perkins and Danforth cut in the 1903 season was within hauling distance of Park's mill. C.G. Davis cut birch and hardwood on the north town line that same year. Perkins and Danforth and Davis continued their operations again the following season. Joining them was C.W. Cooley of Milo village; he cut white ash in the northeast quadrant and hauled it to the West Seboois Station. The Perkins and Danforth cuts in 1905 and 1906 were in the southwest corner of T4R9 N.W.P. and teamsters hauled the logs to Schoodic siding (Drummond siding). They also had permission to use Park's mill at West Seboois for cutting the birch. For the years 1907 through 1911 Perkins and Danforth crews cut the west side of Seboeis Lake and hauled to West Seboois.¹⁸ The Stetsons apparently sold little birch stumpage from about 1911 through 1913.

Birch was equally predominant on Prentiss land, but it was a long haul to West Seboois. Horses or scows or both hauled the wood across the lake and up through The Inlet to the Upper Landing to reach West Seboois. In 1895 the Stewarts of the Boyd Lake mill and Perkins and Danforth of the South Twin mill both made birch stumpage offers to the Prentiss family; they declined the offers. However, the Stewarts received a permit for 1897,

¹⁴ Prentiss Papers; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

¹⁵ Prentiss Papers, Prentiss sales log books; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

¹⁶ *The Industrial Journal*, February 22, 1895

¹⁷ Stetson Family Papers, Stetson Ledger 1902–1914; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

¹⁸ Stetson Family Papers, E & I.K. Stetson Permit Book, Feb 1904–July 1909, and log cutting maps; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

when their loggers cut 1,284 cords of birch. The family rejected Porter's offer in 1899. Perkins and Danforth succeeded in receiving a permit to cut in 1901 (1,028 cords), 1903 (2,272 cords), and from 1907 through 1913. The company shipped all its birch wood overseas to manufacturing sites in England and Scotland.¹⁹ These are the only birch stumpage permits issued by the family during their ownership that ended in 1930.

From 1914 through 1943 the Stetsons issued birch contracts, many of them related to the U.S. Pegwood and Shank Company of Brownville village. The company started with a five-year contract beginning in 1914. As an assist to the company, the Stetsons issued the B&A, on January 1, 1915, a five-year lease, renewable for another five years, for land for another set of siding tracks 5 miles south of West Seboois at Packard siding. In some years U.S. Pegwood crews hauled the 500,000 board feet of white and yellow birch with butts of eight inches or larger; nothing six inches or more could be left behind. The company renewed their contract for a second five years with William M. Freeman cutting for them in 1923. Apparently the company did not renew its contract in 1925 given the next Stetson birch contract was not awarded until 1938, when L.C. Bearce cut on the west half of T4R9 N.W.P.

The Bearce contract was the first in an 11-year period of almost yearly birch logging activity. In 1940 Arthur J. Marmen cut 500 cords on the land with a cant to Upper Ebeemee Lake and the East Branch of the Pleasant River; he hauled to a railroad siding. In 1942 Paul Arbo cut in areas handy to the Philbrook Road and west of the state's right away for the road from Brownville to Millinocket villages. Arbo was back again in 1943 with a U.S. Pegwood contract for the area above Schoodic Mountain and west of the B&A tracks. More birch logging took place in 1944. The following year Brewer Manufacturing in Old Town cut 500,000 board feet of yellow birch, hard and soft maple, and beech logs that crews delivered to their mill a half-mile south of Bear Brook on the road between Brownville and Millinocket villages.²⁰ For the seasons of 1945 and 1946 the Dowlin Lumber Company cut on both sides of the Philbrook Road. In 1946 and 1947 Harold V. Leeman cut from the Bear Brook area in

the northeast quadrant. On a separate contract for the seasons 1947 through 1949, Dowlin cut on land west of the B&A and north of Two Mile Brook. In 1949 William Gourley cut on both sides of the Philbrook Road on a 150-acre parcel beginning three-fourths of a mile above Schoodic siding.

Logs that floated: hackmatack

In the 1825 burned area of the Seboeis drainage the hackmatack matured by the time loggers returned to the area in the early 1870s. In the northwest portion of the Seboeis drainage Stetson offered no hackmatack contracts, but Prentiss' first permits (1874–1893) were for this tree.²¹ When referring to hackmatack, lumbermen and stumpage records used the terms "knees" and "juniper knees." A "knee" was the right angle of the tree trunk to the root. Hackmatack was also known as juniper, tamarack, or eastern larch. They grew in boggy areas, matured to merchantable size in 40–50 years, and were nearly wiped out in Maine by insects some years before 1894, a year in which some naked trunks still stood.²² A 10–15 year old tree provided small knees.



50,000 "knees" or more were the loggers' harvest in 1882. The knee is part of the hackmatack trunk and the one main root that grows along the top of the ground. Ship builders used both the tree trunk and the "knee." They used the "knees" for support of deck beams, the keel, and masts.

(courtesy boothbayharborshipyard.blogspot.com)

¹⁹ *The Industrial Journal*, February 1911

²⁰ The lease for the land on which they built the mill was for two years. Stetson Family Papers, lease folders; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

²¹ In Seboeis township on the East Branch and Seboeis Stream, Prentiss issued permits between 1870 and 1890 and in Howland township for 1881, 1882, and 1887.

²² *Maine Forest Commissioner's Report 1894*; available online at Hathi Trust

Boat builders used both the hackmatack “knee” and the milled lumber of the trunk. The wood was decay resistant, tough, durable, and lightweight; had superb flotation; its acidity did not corrode iron fasteners; and its texture gripped any fastener better than any other wood. Craftsmen used the largest “knees” as braces for support of deck beams, the keel, and masts. They incorporated smaller “knees” elsewhere in a vessel. Hackmatack lumber was for the top timbers of boat frames, planking, and occasionally for keels.²³

Shipyards purchased “knees” and lumber from ship lumber dealers like Holyoke and Littlefield in Brewer. This company was open by 1870 and still run by a member of each family in 1913–1914. In 1870 two other like companies were in Bangor and those two were still in business in 1899; one other company opened and closed during that time period. By 1882 Maine had six companies engaged in ships’ knees and lumber. That year they collectively sold 50,000 knees at a value of \$82,750 and had \$10,000 in white pine mast sales. Eighteen years later Maine mills cut 50 knees.²⁴

The harvesting of “knees” took place during the winter.²⁵ Typically only the top couple inches of a peat-type bog freeze. The tree has one main root that grows at 90 degrees to the trunk as do other smaller roots. The main root is generally only partially buried in the ground. A logger dug around the main root with a grub ax and ax, cutting off the lesser roots, thus, freeing it from its grip of the boggy land. He then cut the main root at a point appropriate to the size of the knee wanted. The logger then began to trim the remaining small roots. If the tree was in a boggy area, then the tree began to slowly fall away with the remaining uncut roots acting as a fulcrum, first tipping up the main root and then lifting the entire

stump out of the boggy ground. If the tree was not growing in loose earth, then once he freed the main root, he might have tied a rope high in the tree and had his oxen put tension on the line to raise the stump as he began to cut away the remaining small roots. The last step was to cut the trunk from the stump and then trim off the remaining smaller roots.

An ox or horse hauled the stumps and their trunks to a yard near a waterway. The logger either tied the floating knees together or secured them on a log raft to float them out, or had teamsters haul them to a mill.²⁶ In the 1990s Jay McLaughlin found a knee in the Penobscot River in the area of the Argyle boom. Once the railroads began operating, they were also a possible means for transporting the “knees” to a mill.



By 1900 Maine shipyard lumber companies sold only 50 knees, but they were not the only craftsmen to use knees as braces. (courtesy Carol Dolan)

Dams, mills, log driving, and stumpage sales

The saw log drives through 1890 apparently did not require a dam at the outlet of Seboeis Lake. The spring runoff was sufficient to carry the volume of trees cut, by only one crew until 1889, and in 1890, when two crews logged. The first drives were from Prentiss land. The Stetson files reveal that they did not begin to issue softwood stumpage contracts until 1890.

The Seboeis Lake dam was probably built in 1890; by November log drivers had a working dam.²⁷ Prior to the

²³ Henry Hall, *Report on Ship-building Industry of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1884)

²⁴ James Eliott Defebaugh, *History of the Lumber Industry of America* (Chicago American Lumberman, 1906–1907) and *Maine Register, State Year-book and Legislative Manuals*.

²⁵ The process of harvesting a ship’s knee in the last half of the 1800s is a matter of deductive reasoning based on input provided by a current logger whose family has been in the business since the 1890s, a modern-day knee harvester, and a man guided by an old-time logger who cut knees in the late 1920s. Jay McLaughlin is a logger from Medway whose family has been in the business since the 1890s. Ken Textor wrote about modern-day harvester Newman Gee in, “Newman’s Knees,” *Down East, The Magazine of Maine*, vol. 45 no. 5 December 1998, pp. 70–73. Greg Bassett, with the guidance of Emery Jordan, harvested a knee for use in his old farmhouse.

²⁶ conversations with James Logan, whose ancestors were involved with “knees,” and with William Krohn, Maine woods historian

²⁷ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, November 26, 1890

building of the dam, a small stream connected Northwest Pond to Seboeis Lake. Based on that, The Inlet at the head of Seboeis Lake was probably a stream.²⁸ The Colby map of Piscataquis County 1882 shows a stream between Northwest Pond and Seboeis Lake and a defined stream, as opposed a broader long inlet, at the head of Seboeis Lake. Surveyor R.M. Nason's "Plan of Township 4 Range 9 [N.W.P.] 1887" map shows the same water features as the Colby map.²⁹ The presence of the dam created the thoroughfare into Northwest Pond and The Inlet.

At some point the Seboeis Dam Company replaced the original dam of log cribs with a three-gate cement dam. The company probably built the replacement about 1910, assuming a 20-year life for a rock crib dam. An investment in a new dam about that time would have been recaptured, as plenty of stumpage remained behind the dam. The impoundment also kept the thoroughfare between Seboeis Lake and Northwest Pond open. This was helpful to those saw-log cutters working Northwest Pond, like the Jordan Lumber Company from 1915–1917. Additionally, the impoundment kept The Inlet flooded.

Another dam that supported loggers in this township was on Otter Brook and thought to be at the foot of the first deadwater. The years in which loggers used this dam are unknown. It was probably a simple splash dam or small rock crib dam. No obvious remains of its presence are visible.³⁰

About 1923 the Prentiss family, owners of the land at Seboeis dam, conferred the dam rights to John E. Kelley of Advance Bag and Paper Company in Howland village. Kelley sought the dam rights so his company could be assured of driving pulpwood from the lake to his mill. In December 1930 Kelley sold the company's dam rights to Bangor Hydro and Electric Company.³¹ During the Kelley ownership neither the Stetson nor the Prentiss stumpage records mention Advance Bag and Paper Company. When the Maine Department of Conserva-

tion acquired the land in the area, Bangor Hydro gave up its rights to the dam.

On only one known occasion did a logger tow either booms of saw logs or booms of pulpwood to the head of the lake and up The Inlet to one of the landings. The Inlet is two miles long, too narrow for a good-size boom, and in the spring with high water has current flowing against any towing. If a large number of loggers had been interested in pulling wood from the lake at the north end, then a conveyor for taking logs from the water would have been on the west side of The Inlet next to the ballast pit spur line. The spur line was gone by 1939.³² Given the absence of such infrastructure, any pulp-length wood came to West Seboois on sleds hauled by teamsters or in later years by trucks. The loggers of pulpwood operations on Stetson and Prentiss lands after 1945 hauled to West Seboois. The only long logs known to have come into West Seboois by water were ones Ernest Ladd sawed at his mill at the Lower Landing in 1954.

The earliest recorded softwood logging in the northwest sector of the West Branch was from Prentiss land. Leavitt and Berry (Matthew) (both of Brownville) cut pine and cedar in 1867. A year later Ira Weymouth was back cutting spruce, pine, and juniper knees. Prentiss issued no stumpage contracts between 1868 and 1874.³³

Beginning in 1874 the Prentiss family began issuing contracts to loggers interested in cutting knees and juniper knees. He approved the cutting of "knees" and refused pine in 1874. The contract for 1877 went to Grant and Riggs, for 1878 to J.F. Bean, and for 1890 and 1893 to A.J. Pierce.

Prentiss started offering contracts for softwood that included pine, spruce, Norway spruce (red pine), cedar, and ash (white and brown) in 1880. N.G. Gould signed a contract for 1881, 1884, 1886, 1887, 1888; Wellington Henderson for 1890; A.J. Pierce for 1890; and Gerry Burr for 1891.

The only two recorded Prentiss contracts for poplar went to Gerry Burr in 1896 and 1900. Teamsters might have hauled this wood to West Seboois siding as opposed to driving it down the West Branch.

The Prentiss softwood contracts continued in 1917 with an agreement with Jordan Lumber Company for

28 Eric Lahti and Arthur Spiess, "Northwest Pond (T4 R9 N.W.P.) Preliminary Archeological Survey – Land for Maine's Future Seboeis Unit Addition, Bureau of Parks and Lands Report by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for the Bureau of Public Lands and Land for Maine's Future Board" (MHPC Quad 107; Doc# 3993)

29 available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

30 conversations with two local long-time camp owners and fishermen in the area, Rodney Cole and Andy Dow

31 This information is from the Penobscot Registry of Deeds; no definition for the rights was available.

32 Barbara Cole moved to the community in 1949, after the forest fire burned through Packard siding where she lived.

33 Prentiss Papers; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

pine and spruce. Two years later Barker Lumber Company cut red and white pine, spruce, and fir. In 1923 E.H. Ladd cut white and red (Norway) pine, spruce, fir, and cedar. Prentiss' last contract was with W.A. Sawyer for cedar poles and ties in 1929.

Before Maine Seaboard purchased Prentiss' south-east quadrant of T4R9 N.W.P. in 1930, the company had Prentiss and Carlisle Company survey it, and based on that survey did not cut pulpwood on it through 1949. The small size of the parcel meant a pulpwood drive down the Seboeis Stream watershed and on to Bucksport was not financially feasible.³⁴ Seaboard assessor Whitney wrote in 1935 that West Seboeis Stream would be tough to drive given low stream banks where high water would wash logs into swampy areas unless drivers placed many booms and wings to prevent it and minimize jams.³⁵ The recommendation in the 1949 survey was to haul to railcars at West Seboois.

Maine Seaboard apparently issued stumpage contracts for pine, which was not cut for pulpwood, and authorized a temporary mill at the Seboeis dam.³⁶ Prentiss owned the land from 1863 to 1929, and nothing in their stumpage records suggested anything about a nearby mill. The logbooks of the Howland Outing Club (1895–1908 and 1915–1927), which had a camp on Endless Lake, made no reference to a mill or sawdust pile, but did note frequent visits to the dam. Carolyn Brown, whose family traveled to their camp on Endless Lake by coming from West Seboois down Seboeis Lake to the dam, passed a large sawdust pile in 1936, the first time she remembers it, but the site had no standing mill. Her family traveled this route until 1944. The Cole family memories include Kennedy's logging crews doing some sawing at the dam in the mid-to-late 1940s.³⁷

The available Stetson softwood stumpage notes before 1890 are few in number; recordings in ledgers commenced in the early 1890s. The basic Stetson stumpage contracts for softwood logs were like the birch contracts with the addition of specified species and size of tree(s) cut.

Stetson contracts involved both rail transportation and driving the West Branch. C.W. Penney worked

as a scalar at an unknown location on Seboeis Lake in 1892.³⁸ That same year Briggs had logging crews cutting some place on the Seboeis watershed. By April 2, 1892 A.H. Chase was on his way in with a crew of log drivers. Before 1895 Jordan Lumber Company had a lumber camp on the lake immediately east of The Inlet and Stewart & Company last used it in 1894, and maybe for another year. From 1894 to 1896 Benjamin Ballard cut cedar posts in the winter and probably loaded them on rail cars at Schoodic siding.³⁹ In the 1890s Haskell and Brown logged during multiple seasons including 1896 from the Schoodic siding area.

In the first decade of the twentieth century Stetson contracts included poplar. In 1903 and 1904 S.D. Warren Company cut and stacked 1,500 cords of poplar, presumably at West Seboois for shipment by train.

During the second decade Stetson poplar contracts continued and once again included pine and other softwood. Fred Ingalls of North Bradford cut cedar for railroad ties from 1914 through 1916. The Jordan Lumber Company was back again in 1916 and 1917 to cut, each year, a million board feet of logs, pine (minimum butt 14 inches), spruce (12 inches), fir (8 inches), and cedar, all of which loggers landed on either Northwest Pond or Seboeis Lake. At the time Jordan Lumber was also cutting on Prentiss land adjacent to the Stetson property. All of these logs went to market via the waterways. Newell B. Gray of Milo cut poplar in 1916 near the water during the peeling season and it went to market via the waterway and railroad. In 1919 Ezekiel Chase of Brownville had a contract to cut 500 cords of poplar on the west side of the B&A tracks; he hauled to Packard siding.

A few Stetson logging operations took place in the 1920s. From 1921 through 1923 Ernest Ladd had a lumber camp below West Seboois' Lower landing and cut pine, spruce, and fir saw logs in an area bounded by the B&A, West Seboeis Stream, and the northeast corner of T4R9 N.W.P.; his crew drove them down the West Branch to the Jordan Lumber Company in Old Town. Ladd might have used the dam on Seboeis Stream well above The Inlet in Long A township; its builder and years of operation are unknown. In 1926–1927 someone cut pulpwood off the northwest side of Schoodic Lake; it might have gone to market via the rail line. If the pulp-

34 "Timber Survey SE1/4 T4R9 N.W.P. July 1949;" available at Maine Bureau of Public Lands, Seboeis Unit files

35 Raymond Whitney letter of June 15, 1935 to Forest Colby of Maine Seaboard Paper Company; available at Maine Bureau of Public Lands, Seboeis Unit files

36 Maine Seaboard became St. Regis Paper Company.

37 conversation with Rodney Cole

38 *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, March 30, 1892

39 Stetson Family Papers, E & I.K. Stetson Day book p.5; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

wood was for Advance Bag and Paper Company in Howland village, then it went down Schoodic Stream.

By 1930 teamsters had started hauling nearly all the non-saw-log-length wood cut around Seboeis Lake to West Seboois for loading on the rail cars and later on trucks. Great Northern Paper Company (GNP) in Milinocket now owned an undivided share of the west half and northeast quadrant of T4R9 N.W.P. and anything the company cut in this area left it via a land route. In 1930 GNP cut a million board feet of pulpwood in the northeast quadrant of T4R9 N.W.P. and hauled it all to West Seboois. An unknown party cut cedar ties on the east shores of Seboeis Lake and along the outlet in 1935.⁴⁰

Even though West Seboeis Stream drives from T4R9 N.W.P. had virtually stopped, logging continued on Stetson lands in this northwest sector. In 1938 Eugene Nason cut ash for Old Town Canoe, but it proved to be inferior wood, so Seaboard had the remaining bad ash culled. About 1939 someone cut cedar for railroad ties along the thoroughfare between Seboeis and Endless lakes. In the 1943 season Old Town Canoe Company was back cutting white ash. A year later Louis Lichtman cut 200 cords of poplar in a square mile area in the northwest quadrant immediately south of the north town line and just east of the Philbrook Road.

The probable last drive from Seboeis Lake was in the mid-to-late 1940s. The Cole family of Northwest Pond used to hunt in the Turtle Pond area on the east side of the southern end of Seboeis Lake. They noted the Kennedy pine-cutting operations. Its crews dumped their logs into booms on Seboeis Lake and towed them to the dam. Some logs went down stream and others sawyers milled at the dam. The milled wood went by truck out over Whitney Ridge through Seboeis village to Howland village.

Logging continued, but trucking replaced the log drives. Between the mid-and-late 1940s Stetson offered a number of pulpwood contracts to the Dowlin and Ladd companies. In 1945 the Dowlin Lumber Company cut pulpwood on both sides of the Philbrook Road beginning 60 chains north of Schoodic siding. Their cut east of Upper Ebeemee Lake from 1946 through 1949 was for S.D. Warren Company. During the 1946 and 1947 seasons Ernest Ladd cut pulpwood for the GNP mill on

Stetson lands west of Upper Ebeemee Lake and the East Branch of the Pleasant River. Based on the letter of extension to the 1947 season, the wood went into the East Branch and Upper Ebeemee Lake and his crew drove it to an unknown location for ground transportation.

During this same time period Stetson also had a great deal of cedar cut. In the 1946 and 1947 seasons Harold V. Leeman cut cedar and pulpwood from the Bear Brook area in the northeast quadrant. In 1948 H.S. Leighton cut cedar posts. Gerry Cullins cut cedar railroad ties during the seasons of 1946, 1947, and 1948 in an area bounded by the north town line, Two Mile Brook and the State Road; all went to market via the railroad.

Stetson issued the last of the stumpage contracts between 1950 and 1955. In 1950 Dowlin Lumber Company had a cutting camp in the Seboeis Lake cove by Bear Brook. From 1950 through 1952 the Draper Corporation operated from a camp near the Lower landing and cut east from Northwest Pond. In 1954 Gerald Ladd signed a one-year lease for a temporary mill below the Lower landing, where he sawed 250,000 board feet of lumber. The lease transferred for the following year to Shepherd and Morse Lumber Company. The Littlefield Lumber Company was operating in the area during the 1953 season.

The central sector: Endless Lake and the West Branch of Seboeis Stream to the Seboeis settlement

A mile from the Seboeis Lake outlet, the thoroughfare crosses into T3R9 N.W.P. and in less than a half-mile enters Endless Lake (Trout Pond). The West Branch of Seboeis Stream exits Endless Lake and within 2 miles reaches Seboeis township (T3R8 N.W.P.) and passes through its western half to join the East Branch of Seboeis Stream 1.5 miles above the Seboeis mill community.

This sector included three large blocks of land, all owned by men with lumbering interests. George M. Weston bought the western one third of T3R9 N.W.P. (one block) and that included the land surrounding Endless Lake in 1859. Between 1859 and 1878 as many as six individuals owned an undivided share, one of those owners being Jeremiah Fenno, Bangor lumberman and owner of a spool mill in Milo in 1878. In 1878 John P. Webber (Massachusetts) started to buy up the shares and by 1886 he owned five and I.S. Blake of Bangor owned the other. Both men sold to John Cassidy in August

⁴⁰ Raymond Whitney letter of June 15, 1935 to Forest Colby of Maine Seaboard Paper Company; available at Maine Bureau of Public Lands, Seboeis Unit files

1886. The second block, which bordered Cassidy on the east, was the Hunnewell Tract owned by Sprague and John Adams and Frank Drummond. Loggers cutting in the west portion of their block hauled to Endless Lake. The third block was the west half of Seboeis township through which most of the West Branch below Endless Lake flowed. Issac M. Bragg, a successful Bangor lumber merchant and an investor in the Endless Lake dam, and Frank A. Wilson bought various parcels between 1878 and 1884.

Loggers interested in softwood, primarily pine and spruce, found their driving on the West Branch easier beginning in late 1869 with a road, dam, and river improvements. By 1840 the settlers on Whitney Ridge had a passable road that came north from Howland village along the west side of Seboeis Stream, and crossed the stream at the south end of Whitney Ridge. By 1864, the settlers (Smarts families and Timothy DeWitt) had a logger's road that went the length of Whitney Ridge, and then curved to the northwest to the outlet of Endless Lake. Henry E. Prentiss came north on this road to the lake in 1864 with Abner DeWitt to survey the future potential of the forest. Some years later loggers developed a road that continued up the west side of Seboeis Stream from where the road from Howland to Whitney Ridge crossed the stream.

Either the number of loggers beginning to work the area or the value of the available timber, or both, influenced the Seboeis Dam Company to build the dam at the outlet of Endless Lake in 1869. Isaac Bragg, Ebenezer Wheeler, and William E. Mann, Bangor lumbermen, sought and received a charter from the Maine state legislature for dam and stream improvement rights on the Seboeis Stream drainage from the south town line of Long A township to the Piscataquis River.⁴¹ The three men and their associates built the first dam at the outlet to Endless Lake and levied a toll on all logs passing through the dam.⁴² Activity was sufficient enough for the company to keep the dam in repair and receive permission from the Maine state legislature to increase tolls in 1881. Most of this early activity was a function of what

loggers cut and landed on Endless Lake as opposed to what they landed on the West Branch south of Endless Lake. The dam owners received legislative support in 1899 for continuing the dam and stream improvements and that implies that lumbermen had determined more stumpage was available for harvesting.

The dam was still a working dam in 1936 when Carolyn Brown first remembers it; her dad used to open and close the gates as the need arose. The Enos Sawyer crews used the dam to drive logs through the late 1940s. Those were the years the Brown family traveled to their camp at the lake via Whitney Ridge by horse and cart; Sawyer was also using horses at that time. In the 1950s the family began to use a home-made jitter-bug, about the size of a jeep, and could still drive across the top of the dam. When there were no logs boomed at the dam, Brown fished from the dam's huge crib logs. The dam was gone sometime after 1966 and before the early 1970s.

The early presence of a dam and the absence of a pre-1900 mill operation at the lake suggest that the loggers were cutting softwood saw logs. If the lake had a mill, then the implication would have been that the 1825 fire engulfed the lake and loggers were cutting birch.⁴³ The fire may have burned near the western edge of the lake, but it left, at a minimum, a substantial amount of unburned timber within a hauling distance of the lake.

A dam was not necessary for any logging on the drainage west of Endless Lake, because all of that land burned in 1825 and no harvestable softwood for a drive was mature enough by 1869. Similarly the dam was not necessary for any down-river driving support in 1869; the 1825 fire burned that area and it had no logs for a drive until later in the century.

Logging in the Endless Lake area might have started a few years before a crew built the dam in 1869. After the initial logging, the number of loggers and the volume of logs cut increased with the larger impoundment needed to support the spring drive. No stumpage records for the land around Endless Lake or within hauling distance have been located.

Logs started flowing into Endless Lake from Seboeis Lake in the 1890s and continued until the late 1940s.

⁴¹ *Acts and Resolves and Special Laws of the State of Maine passed by the Legislature of the state of Maine, 1869*, Seboeis Dam Company

⁴² The charge per log was, in part, an amount to cover the cost of the dams and stream improvements with an eight percent return on their investment. When the owners recouped the initial investment, the owners dropped the toll to a level that covered annual costs of upgrades and maintain the return on investment.

⁴³ About 1956 South Branch Lumber Company set up a portable mill between the road and the lake on the west side of the outlet; it milled pine. According to Carolyn Brown, who spent her summers at the lake beginning in 1936 no old sawdust pile was ever evident any place on the lake before 1956.

They came from the Stetson and Prentiss lands and the Adams and Drummond lots of the northeast quadrant of Lake View township, the south end of Seboeis Lake. Loggers were on the Adams' Lake View township lots by 1880 and were cutting birch. Whether they also cut softwood during this early era is undiscovered. Even though no Adams and Drummond stumpage records are available, these men were in the stumpage selling business and as the different softwoods matured, they would have sold stumpage to loggers who drove the softwood. After 1907 some pulpwood from their land might have been boomed and towed to the road to Rand Cove and the new B&A siding.

A little over a mile below Endless Lake the West Branch flows into and through Seboeis township's western half, where some limited logging information suggests what might have taken place. In the mid-1880s loggers operating in the northeast corner of Lake View township had a network of roads that extended east over the town line headed toward the West Branch, but to an otherwise unknown destination; perhaps the road that was on the west side of the stream.

Presumably Bragg liked the logging opportunities available in the forest through which the West Branch flowed south of Endless Lake. Given Bragg's business interests, one could assume that logging took place on his land. The area included pine, spruce, birch, poplar, and hackmatack. Loggers cutting birch in the west part of the township had several options for their cut. The birch mill at Hardy Pond was within hauling distance for any birch cut in the western half of Seboeis township. When the mill first opened and finally closed is undiscovered, but it was still sawing in 1914. By 1914 a tote road ran on a north-south axis through the west side of the southeast quadrant and a six-building camp was at the CPR crossing.⁴⁴ This might have been a siding for loading birch and unloading supplies. To the east at the CPR's Seboeis Stream crossing a birch mill opened in 1890.

The last of the known saw-log drives on the West Branch from Endless Lake occurred in the mid-to-late 1940s. The Kennedy cut on the southeast side of Seboeis Lake was the last to come into Endless Lake from upstream. Enos Sawyer was the last with cutting camps at Endless Lake; one was at the head of the lake and the

other was on the lower end on the east side through the mid-to-late 1940s.⁴⁵

No information is available on the probable last pulpwood drive on the West Branch between Endless Lake and the Piscataquis River. No pulpwood came from Seboeis Lake into Endless Lake after 1930; crews hauled it to the railroad at West Seboeis. During the war years the pulp and paper mills had cutting contracts as close to the mills as possible due to lack of fuel and trucks. Given this strategy some loggers may have cut and driven pulpwood on the West Branch through the war years. Once the war was over trucking quickly replaced the small stream drives. Once the Howland village mill closed in 1952 no pulpwood came down the stream.⁴⁶

The northeast sector: Cedar and East Branch lakes, and the East Branch of Seboeis Stream to Seboeis Stream to the Piscataquis River

One of two upper threads of the East Branch of Seboeis Stream (East Branch) flows from East Branch Lake, which is a mile south of the northern border of T3R9 N.W.P. The second thread is the outlet stream of Cedar Lake and it flows southeast to join the other thread 1.5 miles below East Branch Lake. The East Branch drains much of the east side of T3R9 N.W.P. before it enters T3R8 N.W.P. (Seboeis) and soon connects with the West Branch of Seboeis at 1.5 miles above the Seboeis settlement at Whitney Ridge, still in the eastern half of the township. Below the junction Seboeis Stream continues another 10 miles south across the corners of Maxfield and Mattamiscontis townships, and into Howland where it empties into the Piscataquis River.

The few men who owned the land surrounding the East Branch between East Branch Lake and the Piscataquis River were in the lumbering business. Sprague and John Adams and Frank Drummond owned the central portion in T3R9 N.W.P., known as the Hunnewell Tract, and Newell Ware of Walpole, Massachusetts and seven others the eastern portion. The Prentiss family managed the southern portion, which was the east half of Seboeis township and most of the Seboeis Stream valley south of this township to the Piscataquis River. Bragg and Wilson owned the eastern half of Seboeis township.

⁴⁴ "Map Township 3 Range 8 N.W.P. 1914", James W. Sewall Company; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

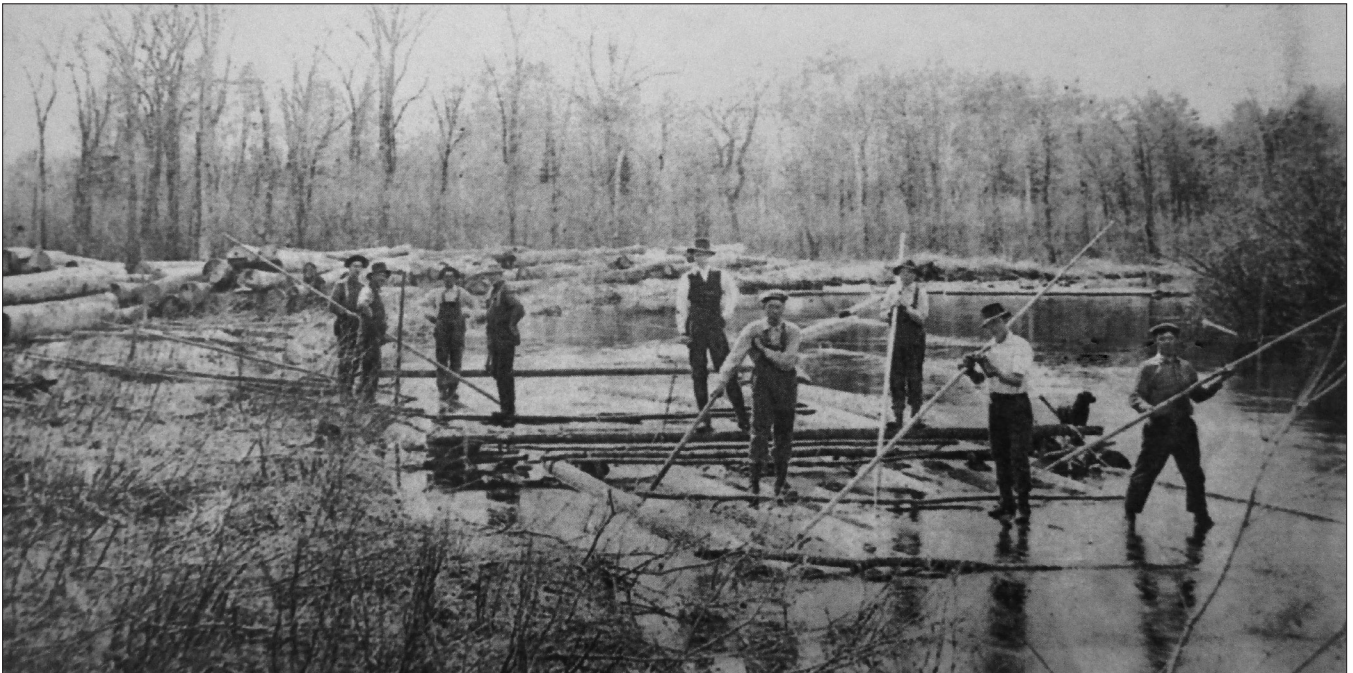
⁴⁵ conversations with Carolyn Brown

⁴⁶ conversations with Carolyn Brown

A small settlement within the drainage developed in the mid-1830s on Whitney Ridge east of the junction of the East and West branches. These few settlers, farmers who logged in the winter, were at the end of the road from Howland village. At the southern foot of the ridge in the vicinity of where the road crossed Seboeis Stream a grist mill operated for an unknown time. The population remained small: 17 settlers in 1860. No large, permanent community ever developed, but in 1889, when the CPR crossed the stream at the bridge on the road to Howland, a birch mill began operations at the crossing and a small mill community with a few homes, boarding house, store, school, and post office were soon in place.

Softwood logging and driving operations

The state land commissioner's 1822 survey recorded a burn along the T3R9 N.W.P. northern border, less than a mile north of East Branch Lake; young wood that needed time to mature covered the area. Given those conditions and that the area was 20 miles from the Piscataquis River, no loggers probably cut and drove prior to 1869. The 1868 Walter Wells report indicated that neither Cedar nor East Branch lakes had a dam, which was probably essential for a profitable drive given the drive's length and the propensity for low spring runoff in the Piscataquis River valley.



Rafts of saw logs were the only way loggers drove their logs from 1800 to 1830; however, in the Piscataquis watershed a few others, like Enos Sawyer and this crew working the Seboeis Stream, were still using them c.1910.

(courtesy of Carolyn Brown and colleagues who published Seboeis Plantation Pictorial History)

The fire of 1825 did not burn into the northern portion of the East Branch drainage in T3R9 N.W.P., but it did engulf everything south of it to the Piscataquis River. The fire burned east along the north border of T3R9 N.W.P. to within a mile of the T3 and T2R9 N.W.P. corner, but its southerly drift is unknown. The eastern edge of the fire was perhaps influenced by the long north-south axis of Endless and Cedar lakes, given the early softwood as opposed to birch logging activity in this area. The fire did drift north over the T3R9 N.W.P. south town line for a short unknown distance.

The earliest loggers cutting in the northern-most part of the township came in from the West Branch of the Penobscot River via Nollesemic Lake. Their logs went north to market via that same route. In 1830 Joseph Kelsey, a surveyor who ran the northern line of Range 9 N.W.P. east to west, found a road a mile east of the T2-T3R9 N.W.P. corner; it led to a cut of the previous year. The loggers were Neal and Estes and they were hauling logs west along the town line destined for the Penobscot River.⁴⁷ The William B. Hayford stumpage log revealed

⁴⁷ Joseph Kelsey letter to Major William Hammett dated April

that Thomas Fowler Jr. cut pine and spruce and some ash in the north portion of the T3R9 N.W.P. Hunnewell Tract in 1871, 1872, 1873, and 1875. His cut went north to the West Branch of the Penobscot River.

Other loggers were driving the East Branch by 1870. In 1871 Eben Webster, who had mill interests in Bangor, cut spruce outside the Hunnewell Tract, which included the area around East Branch Lake. His spruce logs went down the East Branch. C. Young and D. Libby cut knees and logs on Bog Brook in the Hunnewell Tract. The Bog Brook cut went down the East Branch.

Beginning about 1881 dams began to support the drives on the East Branch. This suggests the number of loggers now interested in cutting in this drainage increased enough to make the investments in dams financially attractive. In 1869 when Isaac Bragg, Ebenezer Wheeler, and William E. Mann, all Bangor lumbermen, received a charter for dam and stream improvement rights,⁴⁸ they worked only on the West Branch. They apparently did no work on the East Branch until 1881, when the partners sought an amendment to their charter to increase the toll at Endless Lake and place a toll on logs passing down the East Branch.

The 1881 amended charter suggests that in 1882 a crew built the East Branch dams at the outlet of East Branch Pond⁴⁹ and at the foot of Gray Ledge Deadwater. The deadwater dam created a two-mile long impoundment whose upper end was at Cedar Brook. It remained in place through at least 1949, but it was gone by 1957.⁵⁰ The dam at East Branch Pond was absent from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) map of 1951. Both dams would have helped with water storage needed to sustain drives. Another driving dam was on Bog Brook that flows into the East Branch not far below Gray Ledge dam; no stream driving history is available.⁵¹ Whether or not Cedar Lake ever had a log-driving dam is unknown, but a dam was two miles below its outlet at the foot of Rocky Bog.⁵²

1830, found at Maine State Archives, Field Notes microfilm referenced as "v3, p258," but found in the hard copy of "v4, p258."

48 *Acts and Resolves and Special Laws of the State of Maine passed by the Legislature of the state of Maine, 1869*, Seboeis Dam Company

49 The dam appears on the J.H. Stuart Company "Topographical Timberland No. 3 Map (Maine) of 1885 and 1894;" available for view on internet in David Ramsey Map Collection

50 It appears on 1942 and 1949 USGS maps, but not on the 1957 USGS map.

51 conversation with Carolyn Brown

52 Carolyn Brown never heard her dad talk about a dam there.

That Cedar Lake did not have a dam was perhaps a function of the nature of the surrounding forest and the location of the B&A. The B&A's Long A siding was 3 miles northwest of the lake and a tote road linked them. As soon as the B&A opened in 1893, loggers for the pulp and paper companies on the Penobscot River were in the area cutting poplar that grew in abundance in this section of Long A following the 1825 fire. Loggers opted for hauling it to the Long A siding as opposed to driving it down the East Branch. Any pine and spruce in the unburned area, which might have been around the south and east sides of Cedar Lake, teamsters could have hauled the short distances to Endless or East branch lakes or to the impoundment of the dam at the foot of Rocky Bog. The volume of pine and spruce growing in the burn might have been small enough to have been landed on the lake and driven without a dam.

With few exceptions, an 1899 legislative act and the Sewall 1920 survey of T3R9 N.W.P. were the only discovered documents that provided a glimpse into the logging that probably took place on the East Branch in T3R9 N.W.P.. In 1880 and 1881 N.G. Gould and Gilbert & Company drove the East Branch and paid half as much per log, probably because some of the supporting structures were not yet in place.⁵³ Given the investment in the waterway, loggers continued to cut and drive the stream. At some point in the 1890s the original partners had recouped their investment and loggers may have cut all the stumpage landowners were willing to sell.

In 1899 the legislature passed the rights to dams and river improvements to the Seboois Dam Company.⁵⁴ This suggests that a new round of log driving was about to commence. These next operations probably included pulpwood for one of the pulp and paper mills from Howland village to Old Town. When the dam company ceased to operate, and collect tolls, is undiscovered.

The Sewall 1920 survey included a few of the dam company's East Branch Stream improvements, and suggested another logging cycle was about to commence. Dams still existed at the foot of Endless Lake, East Branch Lake, and at Rocky Bog. Loggers could drive long and short logs on both branches of Seboeis Stream; Cedar Brook could handle only pulpwood; and Bog Brook

53 amended Seboeis Dam Company Charter 1881, *Maine Acts and Resolves*

54 Seboois is the correct spelling. It was a dam company formed in 1870 for the Seboois River in T6&7 R7 to the north.

required considerable booming in order to drive. The survey recommended landing logs on East Branch Lake and driving from there. A tote road went up along the west side of the East Branch and over to Cedar Lake.⁵⁵

As logs on the East Branch passed through the Gray Ledge Deadwater dam and then passed the mouth of Bog Brook about a mile north of Seboeis township, they soon entered land burned in the 1825 fire and continued in that burn to the Piscataquis River. About 1.75 miles below the road crossing to Whitney Ridge, the stream passes into Maxfield township and after a half-mile flows 1.4 miles across Mattamiscontis township, followed by 6.25 miles through Howland township's unsettled land to the Piscataquis River.

In 1865, when Prentiss traveled to the DeWitt residence at Whitney Ridge in Seboeis township, he probably came from Howland village via the road that paralleled Seboeis Stream. Prentiss liked what he saw of the Seboeis Stream valley in Howland township and eventually managed most of the land (3,000–4,000 acres), excepting the lots closest to the mouth of the stream at the Piscataquis River.

Beginning about 1873 Prentiss managed Seboeis township property owned by his friend Solomon Parsons, who passed it to his son and daughter, George A. and Clara P. Parsons.⁵⁶ The Prentiss management of this land apparently ended about 1900 and in 1902 the Parson heirs sold the lots they still owned to Benjamin B. Thatcher, a former lumberman and a founder of the Orono Pulp and Paper Company in 1890. To what use Thatcher put the property is undiscovered, but given his business interests, the logging probably continued, as it did for other landowners in the area.

Logging along the stream in Seboeis township began about 1864. That year one local logger, Levi Lancaster Jr., began cutting some fair-size sapling trees in the burn and that got the attention of Prentiss. What logging took place over the next nine years remains undiscovered. Between 1873 and 1896 Prentiss offered stumpage contracts that fell into three primary categories: softwood (pine, spruce, cedar, poplar, and ash); knees and juniper

knees; and birch. The Prentiss stumpage reports generally did not give a cutting site other than the eastern half of Seboeis township. Some of the cutting sites were close to South Branch Lake, but softwood loggers drove the East Branch as opposed to landing on and driving from the lake, a long swampy route to the Penobscot River.⁵⁷

Loggers interested in a Prentiss contact made an initial contact for permission to explore the property for the desired trees. Following the exploration the logger made a proposal for what he would pay for the stumpage. If they could not reach an agreement, then Prentiss usually had another interested person. A stumpage agreement included the name of the scalar, who was often a logger who bid in other years for stumpage. In some years the family offered multiple stumpage permits, each for a different kind of tree with a stipulated dimension.

Logging in Seboeis township with a Prentiss stumpage contract occurred nearly yearly. Knee loggers included: C.W. Smith and E.G.W. Emery (1873), Seth Brann (1874 cutting north of South Branch Lake), Smart and Brown (1881), A.J. Pierce (1890), and George Mayo and Oscar Kelley (1891). The softwood loggers included: Lovejoy and Doble, and Brown and Smart, cutting east of Seboeis Stream (1874); Smart and Brown (1875); James A. Thissell, cutting on the west side of Seboeis Stream (1877); Smart and Brown, cutting on the East Branch in the north part of the township (1877); Thissell, cutting west of Seboeis stream and south of the public lot (1879); Smart (1880); Weymouth and Stanford cutting pine, spruce, cedar, white and black ash, and poplar (1886, 1887, 1888); Nahum Emery, a Howland village lumberman, cutting poplar and pine (1892, 1893); and the Davis brothers, cutting softwood (1895 and 1896).

During this same general time period and down stream in Howland township, loggers cut on the Prentiss-owned lands as recorded in a Prentiss stumpage ledger of 1874–1897. The permits issued between 1874 and 1885 were typically for softwood, ash, and knees. The stumpage record included: Nahum Emery, softwood logs and sleepers (1874); Arnold Ambrose, softwood and ash (1877); Foster and Oak, softwood (1879 and 1880); B.G. Bryer, knees (1880); Foster and Thissell, softwood

⁵⁵ James Sewall, *Field Assessment T3R9 N.W.P.*, 1920; available at Maine State Archives. The Sewall report has the East Branch flowing from Cedar Lake.

⁵⁶ He noted the Parsons ownership in an 1873 entry. Prentiss Papers, Henry Prentiss' log and stumpage books; available at University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections

⁵⁷ Carolyn Brown never heard her family talk of any logs or pulpwood being driven out of South Branch Lake, which is in the Penobscot River watershed, not the Piscataquis River watershed. The Wilcox mill operated at the lake's edge for a time in the 1940s and it used the lake for log storage.

(1881); James B. Carey, knees (1882); Foster and Tibbetts, softwood and ash (1883).

Beginning in 1886 the Prentiss permits began to include pulpwood, but listed no mill destination. The permits included: Weymouth and Stanford, poplar pulpwood (1886); Charles L. Smart, knees and sleepers (1887); H.M. Foster, softwood (1887); A.L. Carey, cedar (1887); Thomas E. Proctor, hemlock bark (1887); J.B. Travis, softwood (1888); Nahum Emery, pulpwood (1889); Henry I. Tate, cedar (1891); Daniel Moulton, pulpwood (1892, 1893); R.G. Lancaster, pulpwood (1894 and 1895); Nahum Emery, pulpwood (1895 and 1896); and unknown logger, unknown tree type (1897).

The nature of the post-Prentiss logging operations in Seboeis and Howland townships remains largely undiscovered. The pulp and paper mill at Howland village bought pulpwood from the local area, but whether or not or to what degree it came from either township is unknown. At some point after 1890 the birch mill on Seboeis Stream at the crossing of the CPR and the road from Howland village began sawing short and long lumber. Starting about 1904, local man Enos Sawyer helped run the mill and by 1915 he owned it and had the right to maintain booms, and to stop and sort logs and lumber in Seboeis Stream at the mill.⁵⁸ Whether or not he continued to mill long and short lumber after he sold in 1917 is unknown, but given his lumbering history he might have. The mill closed about 1927. Nevertheless, Enos Sawyer and his son, who were still logging and perhaps sawing short and long timber at the mill, repurchased the mill in April 1932 and ran it until he sold to Red Ball Corporation of Rhode Island in 1946. The corporation sold a year later to John W. Campbell of Bangor and Reuben D. Hinckley of Blue Hill. The mill closed by 1952.⁵⁹

Other drives from upstream continued after the Prentiss years, but they probably dwindled. Other than drives to their mill, the Sawyers remembered long-log drives ending about 1930. The pulpwood drives continued, but with one exception, no reports have been discovered. One of the last long-log drives to pass through Seboeis mill community, and the first in a generation, was in spring 1942 with 600,000 board feet of pine and spruce logs.⁶⁰ This was part of the war effort, when

trucks, caterpillars, and gas were scarce. The logging crew used horses, as opposed to caterpillars, to move logs to the stream landing at an unknown location above the Seboeis mill community. At 71 years of age Enos Sawyer directed the drive and with 19 other men got the long logs to the Atlas Plywood Mill at Howland village.⁶¹ As they moved down stream, Sawyer divided his men between the two sides of the stream and had two men in a bateau picking the rear. They used dynamite to break the jams. Addie Sawyer, Enos' wife, cooked for the men. Given the relatively short distances on Seboeis Stream, the main camp was at Seboeis mill community, where trucks returned them at the end of each day.

The last of the pulpwood drives were probably to the paper mill in Howland village. Gilman Paper Company owned the mill in 1940 and drew most of its pulpwood from the surrounding area; perhaps that included the Seboeis drainage. When they closed in 1949 St. Regis Paper Company bought the mill. At the time they owned the southeast quadrant of T4R9 N.W.P., but crews hauled the pulpwood to West Seboeis railroad siding as opposed to driving it down stream. The company closed the mill in 1952 and no pulpwood drives followed.⁶²

Birch logging and milling operations

Equally as large as the softwood logging operations in the East Branch and Seboeis streams' drainage south of the north town line of Seboeis township were those related to birch. The earliest and closest birch mill was perhaps the mill in Mattamiscontis township at the mouth of Mattamiscontis Stream on the Penobscot River.⁶³ When the Roberts family sold to David Plumley of Lincoln in 1869, the deed included a mill and buildings. At a minimum the mill probably cut birch. The second mill was directly across the river at South Lincoln, where in 1871

coln, ME: Lincoln Press, 2010)

61 Given the scarcity of trucks, rail cars, and fuel during the war years, Atlas Plywood Company might have conducted a few more river drives, but they did not extend beyond 1949 and the mill closed in 1955.

62 conversation with Carolyn Brown. In 1955 the Lincoln Pulp and Paper Company still owned the Howland township land from the east bank of Seboeis Stream to just short of the Piscataquis River. Given their mill location on the Penobscot River the pulpwood did not reach the mill via Seboeis Stream.

63 The Abenaki meaning of Mattamiscontis is "young alewife stream," which they applied to the mouth of the stream flowing into the Penobscot River. Settlers applied the name to the township through which the stream flows.

58 *Daily Kennebec Journal*, March 3, 1915

59 The last listing in the *Maine Register, State Year-book and Legislative Manual* was in 1951.

60 Carolyn Brown et al., *Seboeis Plantation Pictorial History* (Lin-

James C. Emerson cut a variety of timber, but specialized in birch for spool bars. John MacGregor, who worked for the Clark Thread Company, came north to the Emerson mill in 1873 and 1874 to supervise the cut for Clark. The mill only cut birch bars. In 1875 MacGregor bought the mill and set up its spool turning operation.⁶⁴

By 1878 MacGregor was looking to expand his operation west across the Penobscot River. He purchased the Plumley Mattamiscontis mill operation and lots 43 and 44 in October 1878. Whether or not he used the mill to saw birch is undiscovered. At the very least it was a staging and storage area for birch brought in from the west. In 1889 MacGregor talked to Prentiss about moving his mill to a spot above South Branch Lake; no information is available on what mill he was referring to or any action taken. He may have decided against the move, when he heard of Cushman's plans for a mill in 1890 at the CPR crossing of Seboeis Stream.

In 1881 Searsport Spool and Box Company bought the Thomas Egery mill in Howland village on the south side of the Piscataquis River at its mouth on the Penobscot River.⁶⁵ Searsport mill workers sawed the birch into bars, and ferried them directly across the river to a Central Maine Railroad siding below West Enfield. Trains hauled the material to Bangor where ships took it to Searsport.⁶⁶ The mill burned before 1889, when the Howland Pulp Falls Paper Company built on the site.

At the CPR's Seboeis Stream crossing, 1.5 miles below the junction of the East and West branches, F.A. Cushman, who had a birch mill on Boyd Lake in Lagrange township, bought about 100 acres of land on both sides of the railroad tracks, 578.5 feet from the east abutment of the bridge over the stream. He sold some of his land to the CPR for a station that would serve his birch mill.⁶⁷ By mid-February 1890 the Cushman mill had already produced 150,000 board feet of spool bar stock of a projected 1.5 million. The mill's five saws and crew of 30 men cut 35 cords of birch per day. His crew loaded the bars on rail cars for shipment to the spool mills at Willimantic and Foxcroft villages, and to Bangor for shipment to



The South Lincoln MacGregor birch mill site (1871–1946), which became one of the largest spool making operations in Maine, is empty, signaling it has completed its operation for the current year. Enos Sawyer cut birch bars at his mill on Seboeis Stream and his teamsters hauled them over the One Day Road to this MacGregor spool mill. (William P. Dean and Larrabee, photographers (1876), courtesy of the Maine Historical Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine (MHPC.S.11092))

Scotland.⁶⁸ The mill burned in February 1891, but he rebuilt.⁶⁹ The mill and railroad resulted in the development of a small community with a mill-owned school, some homes, store, post office, and boarding house.

The Cushman mill, under a sequence of different owners, cut spool bars through c.1927.⁷⁰ Financial difficulties caused Cushman to sell in 1893 to Charles Davis and Sons, who owned the mill, but may have had Enos Sawyer of Maxfield run it. In 1904, Sawyer bought the mill and property, and continued to operate the mill. He used a road from the mill to the MacGregor landing at the mouth of Mattamiscontis Stream on the Penobscot River opposite the MacGregor mill in South Lincoln. Teamsters made one round trip a day hauling birch to the site. Sawyer sold August 10, 1917 to the MacGregor Corporation, now one of the three largest spoolwood operations in Maine.⁷¹ About 1921 MacGregor apparently leased the mill to V.R. Nason & Sons and they continued to cut spool bars through c.1927, when the milling of birch stopped.⁷²

⁶⁴ Dana Willis Fellows, MD, *History of Lincoln Maine* (Lewiston, ME: Dingley Press, 1929)

⁶⁵ *Mount Desert Herald* November 5, 1881; a Bar Harbor, ME newspaper

⁶⁶ *The Weekly Underwriter – An Insurance Newspaper*, Vol. 31, July 5–December 17, 1884 inclusive (New York: The Underwriter Printing and Publishing Company, 1884)

⁶⁷ *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, January 10, 1890

⁶⁸ *The Industrial Journal*, February 21 and May 2, 1890

⁶⁹ *The Industrial Journal*, February 6, 1891

⁷⁰ *The Maine Register, State Year-book and Legislative Manuals* through 1926–1927

⁷¹ Penobscot County Registry of Deeds

⁷² conversation with resident Carolyn Brown: Eugene Nason opened a small mill of some kind near the schoolhouse in Seboeis village; it closed by 1940.

The earliest recording of birch logging bordering the East Branch of Seboeis Stream and Seboeis Stream were the Prentiss stumpage records. The initial Prentiss birch permits in Seboeis township went to the Clark Company in 1874,⁷³ and J.M. Spencer in 1876 and 1877. In 1879 Foss took a cutting permit for birch in Howland township. These cuts predated the advent of the 1881 Searsport Spool and Box Company mill at Howland village, the CPR of 1889 and the Seboeis mill of 1890.⁷⁴ Teamsters hauled the cuts of all these operations to one of two probable locations. The closest mill was to the east through Mattamiscontis township to the Penobscot River (6–8 miles). The closest railroad was the B&A at Milo village and the line connected to the spool mill at Boyd Lake. However, the distance from eastern Seboeis township to Milo village was in excess of 14 miles.

Beginning in 1881 teamsters had the option of hauling to the Searsport mill in Howland village. In Seboeis township L.B. Smart and A.G. Sawyer cut in 1883 and W.W. Freese and J. Pettingill cut in 1887. In Howland

township a contract went to Hathorn and Foss Company in 1885, and T.S. Heal and Sons in 1886.

The 1889 Seboeis mill became another destination for teamsters hauling birch. MacGregor of the South Lincoln mill had a Seboeis township stumpage permit in 1888 and another in 1889. Hathaway and Whittier logged in 1892. The Davis brothers cut in 1895 and 1896 for the Seboeis mill. In 1897 Lancaster was interested in a Howland township permit, but whether or not he received one is unknown.

Birch logging continued following the recorded activity of the Prentiss years. Pictures of the Seboeis mill yard in 1904 showed rows of piled birch bars. The MacGregor purchase of the Seboeis mill in 1917 suggested plenty of birch stumpage was still within hauling distance of the mill. The mill stopped sawing birch in 1927, but loggers may have continued to haul it to the CPR at Seboeis mill for transportation to other mills. The mill at South Lincoln closed in 1946.



The O'Neil family c.1895
(Courtesy of members of the O'Neil family.)

⁷³ The Clark Company might be the Clark Thread Company of Newark, NJ or the Clarks who owned the spool mill at Boyd Lake in Orneville about this time.

⁷⁴ *Mount Desert Herald* November 5, 1881; a Bar Harbor, ME newspaper



Front yard and back yard views of the O'Neil family home and sporting camp c.1895; one of eight abodes in West Seboois near the Bangor and Aroostook rail line. (Courtesy of members of the O'Neil family.)





The Chamberlain Lake Tote Road, a major logging tote road to northern Maine, east of KIW c.1920, In its earliest years the only use of the road was during the winter when snow and ice covered the stumps and rocks. When loggers began to use it in other seasons, they "corduroyed" it by placing logs next to each other in the wet muddy sections to keep the wagon wheels from becoming stuck in mud.

(Bert Call Collection (photo by Bert Call, Bert Call Collection, courtesy of Special Collections Raymond H. Fogler Library, DigitalCommons@UMaine)

Afterword

Logging history in the Piscataquis River watershed continues beyond the early 1950s. The writers of that history will want newspaper accounts, landowners' stumpage records, pulp and paper company files, forest assessments, and individuals' stories. They will have access to more digitized newspapers, but I don't see listings for the archival material from the post-1950 era's landowners, and pulp and paper companies that once dotted the Penobscot River, and I am not familiar with a next-generation story-recorder who wears the mantel of William R. Sawtell.

The most prolific story collector in the Piscataquis River watershed was William (Bill) R. Sawtell, who sadly can no longer continue. I believe he knew that folks needed to be asked to tell their story. My experience is that Mainers like to be asked and do not typically come forward with family information unless nudged. I hope Bill serves as an inspiration to others to continue the recording of people's memories. Bill's work helped inform what I wrote by providing information not available any other place.

In recent years in the Piscataquis watershed, local town libraries have joined historical societies in collecting the stories and memories as shared by residents. The community people involved in championing these efforts know their long-time residents and how to connect with them. These archives will ultimately provide a rich and important resource. A common utterance when

I talk to community members is: "I wish you had come around ten years ago, my neighbor, who also grew up here, had many stories." What is important is to collect the stories no matter the generation or the era of which they speak. You can be a part of this effort.

Some day I look forward to being able to electronically search more Maine newspapers, especially the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* and its Bangor successors between 1900 and the mid-1950s. The Maine Newspaper Project, as led by the Maine State Library, is an ongoing project to digitize old Maine newspapers. Information about the project is available online at Maine Newspaper Project, and Digital Maine Repository. You can help with this effort too.

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, someone spearheaded an effort to collect the remaining records of Maine's lumber barons and large landowners, and some logging and paper companies of the log-driving era. They made them available through University of Maine Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections. I hope there will be another effort to bring in more like material that will include such activity in the whole of the twentieth century.

Another 70 years has already passed since the end of the drives of which I wrote. Stories are lost every day. The history of the post-log-driving era will be richer, if whatever you do is not "10 years too late" like I was.



When I check the outlet area of ponds and lakes for dams, I'm looking in the water for this kind of evidence; this happens to be at the outlet of B-Pond. (photo from a Bill Geller exploration)

Sources of Information

The most frequent question of those who help me and with whom I share information is: in what sources do you find this information and where are they located? My response, in the following paragraphs, is the bibliography in a non-traditional format. Each of the book's 1,000+ footnotes inform the reader of the specific source.

Lumbermen worked according to township boundary lines and they define the organization of archival materials. Staff at the Maine State Archives organized all the old and more recent land surveys and assessments by county and township. The archive has the most extensive and complete collection. The Raymond Fogler Library also has such documents. These surveys typically describe the nature of the forest and any human activity.

The Maine Register, State Year-book and Legislative Manual, one for each year beginning about 1870, is organized by county and township (both organized and unorganized), and provides a yearly glimpse of who's who and the town's business activity. Many of these are available online through the Hathi Trust. For this book I read the registers' sections for each town to identify the types of mills it had, their owners, and their years of operation.

The earliest county histories, which are collections of each town's history, are those of Piscataquis (Loring) and Penobscot (Chase) in the 1880s. A Maine state gazetteer (Varney) of the same era has some early history of every county and town in Maine. Individual town histories, which were typically written after 1900, are numerous, with the largest collections at the Maine State, Raymond Fogler, and Bangor Public libraries. Small town libraries often have what no other library has.

To supplement town histories old newspapers are a valuable source. *The Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, which covers the eastern half of Maine, is searchable online for the years 1832–1900 through newspaperarchive.com. The link is available free at Raymond Fogler Library or for a nominal monthly rate for your home

computer. The archive includes a number of other old Maine newspapers.

Not all newspapers are searchable electronically, but they are well worth reading. *The Piscataquis Observer*, 1842 to current, with columns organized by township is available on microfilm at a number of the University of Maine libraries. I read March, April, and May through 1953 for this book. *The Maine Mining Journal* that after a few years became *The Maine Mining and Industrial Journal*, and then *The Industrial Journal*, published from c.1880 to 1910 and has a wealth of business information. Logging was an important part of the Maine economy and the media reported on who was cutting how much and where, and, in the spring, the log drives were also worthy of coverage. This publication is available on microfilm at the Raymond Fogler Library.

As I read the preceding materials, I kept track of names and then I looked them up on ancestry.com at my local library, Mantor Library. Here I learned about a person's family and their business activity that I could track across time.

In terms of logging, the names of the landowners are a key element in uncovering logging information. Those who owned large blocks of land did so with one thing in mind, to make money by selling stumpage. Each county's registry of deeds is a key resource. They have the old lot maps that some times have names on them. Sometimes a map is with a deed. Occasionally you can be lucky and find filed copies of leases. Some deeds provide information about structures. It takes just one name in an area of interest; with that you can search back or forward in time and you will probably find who the abutters were.

To find out when and where logging took place on a yearly basis, the key is to locate stumpage reports. Fortunately a surprising number of the families of these large landowners left a great deal of their cutting records with the Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections. Great Northern Paper Company also gave a great deal of its

archives to the Raymond Fogler Library and the Millinocket Historical Society.

When searching for a township, do not simply rely on the township's current name; before each had a name, it had a township number and a range number. For example, Seboeis Township was T3R8 N.W.P..

Some activity in the Maine woods required the approval of the Maine state legislature. From the beginning of Maine's statehood, the legislative acts and resolves of each year are bound in yearly volumes and they are indexed. The use of the index requires the name of a company and in most cases I had no name, but I knew the waterways being driven and often a company name included the name of a river or stream or lake or mountain. To build a dam on a waterway or make stream improvements generally required a legislative granted charter.

Maps, county and township, are another useful source of information. Many of the maps are available online at the University of Southern Maine Osher Library or the Library of Congress. The Walling Piscataquis County map of 1858 is the earliest that includes homes (with the owner's name), mills, schools, which helps one understand the flow of people. The Colby atlases of the 1880s

have similar information. The Way and Hubbard maps reveal the evolution of tote road development north of the Piscataquis River (1870–early 1900s).

Nearly all maps focused on logging operations are by township. The largest collections are at: Raymond Fogler Library Special Collections, Maine State Archives, Maine State Library, and Millinocket Historical Society. Search by township name.

Old pictures, labeled or unlabeled, are another helpful tool in translating and clarifying logging activity. A number of Maine institutions have magnificent large collections of old pictures that one can access online. The entities include: Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Maine State Archives, Raymond Fogler Library, Maine State Library, and the Maine Historical Society. A review of the pictures at these sites will provide a list of the photographers for addition research and more pictures at other locations.

Two other key sources of information are local historical societies and people.

Enjoy the fun and challenge of the search.

Glossary

- birch** “Spool wood” refers to white birch (birch). Once a logger felled a birch tree, a teamster hauled it to a “birch mill.” Such a mill might perform up to four milling steps. A sawyer first cut the log into four-foot lengths. The second step was to mill a “birch bolt,” a four-foot birch log cut lengthwise so it has four square corners. The third step was to rip the timber lengthwise into square four-foot long bars of various dimensions. The fourth step was to turn these bars on a lathe into a four-foot long round dowel that was cut into spools for shaping and drilling. In this book a “birch mill” performs one or all of the first three steps and a “spool mill,” which might also do the first three steps, turns the actual spools.
- boom** A boom is a string of large, long logs connected end-to-end with boom chains beginning in the 1870s. Prior to that they were pinned together with birch pins in a way that provided some flexibility vertically and horizontally. A boom could be as long as needed. Sometimes loggers stretched a boom across a river or stream to stop logs. In other places they used them along the river’s edge to keep logs out of the river coves and boggy areas. Behind a dam, loggers often used them to create a channel through which the logs floated.
- boom bag** A boom becomes a boom bag when a logger connects its two ends so that the boom surrounds a floating mass of logs. The boom bag kept the logs contained as a headworks or a boat towed the boom bag to a desired destination.
- box shooks** Box shooks are the wooden pieces assembled for a wooden packing box.
- boxwood** Lumbermen referred to poor-quality white pine as boxwood, because they sold it to wooden box manufacturers.
- cookee** A cookee worked for the logging camp and log drive cook, and among other things, delivered the two meals served on the river away from camp each day.
- cruiser** A cruiser was a person, hired by a landowner, who methodically walked through a property noting the tree growth and its quality, current existing structures, and the potential of toting, hauling, and driving.
- deadwater** A deadwater is a portion of a river or stream that is a smooth body of water with a weak current.
- excelsior** Excelsior is string-like shavings of poplar wood; furniture makers used it for cushioning and many manufacturing companies used it for packing.
- haul road** A road on which teamsters hauled logs as opposed to a tote road on which teamster toted supplies.
- headworks** A headworks was a large log raft used to tow a collection of logs, a log boom (a boom bag). The raft had a capstan fitted to a keyhole near the center of the raft. A team of ten to sixteen men pushed on wooden arms to turn the capstan that wound in a 1,000-foot rope that drew the raft to an anchor. When the raft reached the anchor, a bateau crew lifted it and the raft crew unwound the rope as the bateau crew took the anchor another 1,000 feet down the lake.
- juniper** Juniper is a tree that grows in boggy areas and is also known as hackmatack, tamarack, and eastern larch.
- knees** Ship builders used knees as braces for the keel, masts, and framing. Loggers cut them from juniper trees; a knee included a portion of the tree trunk as connected to the main root, which grew at a right angle to the trunk.
- last block** Loggers cut rock maple (sugar maple) for “last blocks.” The shoe manufacturing businesses used “last blocks” from which they manufactured

lasts, shoe forms, shoe-trees, shoe pegs, and wooden heels.

Lombard A steam-powered Lombard was the first vehicle used by loggers to haul wood. It looked like a train engine except the cab with the driver was in front of the vehicle, its front wheels were skis attached to the steering wheel, and caterpillar-like treads at the rear moved it forward.

pine In this book the use of the word “pine” refers specifically to white pine.

picking the rear The river drivers who picked the rear followed the rear of the drive, moving any stray logs hung up on the banks back into the current.

rock crib(s) Loggers used rock cribs as the fundamental building blocks for any lasting structures in the water. They used single cribs for piers they set in the middle of bodies of water or for docks along a waterway and multiple rock cribs for regular dams, splash dams, and roll dams. The loggers built the cribs with logs and filled them with rock. To build a crib, loggers lay two or more logs parallel to each other, commonly eight feet apart. They then placed logs across the parallel logs at intervals, creating an 8- by 8-foot square or squares. Loggers repeated this same pattern of laying logs until the crib reached a desired height.

roll dam A roll dam’s primary purpose was to increase water depth in a shallow area of a river or stream or to flood out rough, rocky portions of a waterway. The roll dam created an impoundment, but did not control the water level of the impoundment. Some had a sluice, but others simply had a smooth timber top that let the water and logs wash over the top of the dam.

rossing machine A machine that removed the tree bark and remaining knobs of cut limbs.

shear boom A shear boom kept logs in the main flow of a channel of rapids. The boom is a string of connected boom logs. The upriver end of the string is anchored and the downstream end floats free. Drivers made these by attaching to the upriver end of each log of a string a second log, a wing or fin, that was held away from the log to which it was attached by another log to create an “A.” The wing side of the “A” was on the shore side of the “A” and kept the boom out in the river current.

ships’ knees - see knees

short and long logs A short log was generally 8 to 12 feet long and long logs were longer than 12 feet.

side boom A side boom is a string of boom logs. The string is anchored at both ends and designed to keep logs from floating into side coves and swampy areas.

side dam Loggers built three different types of side dams, not necessarily always with rock crib construction methods. Some side dams were also called wing dams and extended from the ends of a main dam to keep water from flowing around an end. Loggers located some side dams at the edge of a body of water to keep the water contained or prevented from draining into another watershed. Other side dams forced the water of a river or stream into a single channel on one side of an island or another.

sleepers Sleepers are railroad ties.

sluice A sluice is a long log or lumber trough that loggers built on rivers to bypass falls and rapids or on steep mountain sides. Those on a river were constructed so that a dam put water through the trough to move the logs. The ones on a mountain-side used no water; the steepness combined with rain, snow, and ice kept them slippery.

snub line Loggers used snub lines in two ways. Teamsters used snub lines to check the speed of their logging sleds when going down steep hills. A heavy rope or steel cable the length of the hill connected to the back of the log sled was wound around one or more large trees or stumps or posts at the top of the hill. The friction from the wound cable slowed the sleds’ descent. River drivers used snub lines when on a headworks with a tail wind. With a tail wind, the crew set the boom anchor and ran the anchor rope or cable around the snub post on the headworks to control the speed of the wind-blown boom and headworks.

softwood Softwood logs were coniferous trees and poplar; they floated.

spiling Spiling is a collection of logs that protect the impoundment side of dams on any kind of water body or line the walls of a rough cliff wall on a waterway. On dams, the spiling logs are driven into the earth on a slant and placed side by side to provide the smooth facing for the dam. On rock walls, the spiling logs are placed vertically one next

to each other to provide a smooth surface for the logs of the drive to slip by.

splash dam Drivers used splash dams, sometimes called squirt dams, at small pond outlets and on small streams where the drivers wanted to control the water flow. Such dams generally had a simple central gate that extended from the floor of the stream to the top of the dam. On some streams, loggers built these dams at short intervals and during the drive worked upstream releasing and retaining water as needed.

stumpage When a landowner sold “stumpage” to a logger that meant the logger bought the right to cut certain kinds of trees of a certain diameter and agreed to pay the landowner a specific sum of money for each board foot of logs cut.

tote road A road on which teamsters toted supplies as opposed to a haul road on which teamsters hauled logs.

trip boom A trip boom is a string of boom logs that block the passage of logs. Trip booms are used on streams and rivers to stop the flow of logs, and they are used at dams to keep logs from being blown away from the sluice. River drivers let the current open such a boom by releasing one end that they kept on a long tether. To close the boom, drivers wound in the tether with a headworks. At a dam,

the trip boom is towed into place by a headworks once the logs are near the dam. As some drivers sluice the logs, others keep shortening the trip boom to keep the remaining logs grouped together and within reach of those sluicing.

T_I.P. This letter structure is a designation used for unorganized townships in the state of Maine. The T is followed by either a number or a letter and stands for Town. The I.P. is a survey abbreviation for “Indian Purchase.”

T_R_ N.W.P. This letter structure is a designation used for unorganized townships in the state of Maine. The T is followed by either a number or a letter and stands for Town. The R is followed by a number and stands for “Range.” The N.W.P. is a survey abbreviation for “North of Waldo Patent.”

T_R_ W.E.L.S. This letter structure is a designation used for unorganized townships in the state of Maine. The T is followed by either a number or a letter and stands for Town. The R is followed by a number and stands for “Range.” The W.E.L.S. is a survey abbreviation for “west of the easterly line of the State.”

wangan Loggers used wangan to refer to the food stuffs, cooking items, clothing, and other materials needed to support a logging camp.

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